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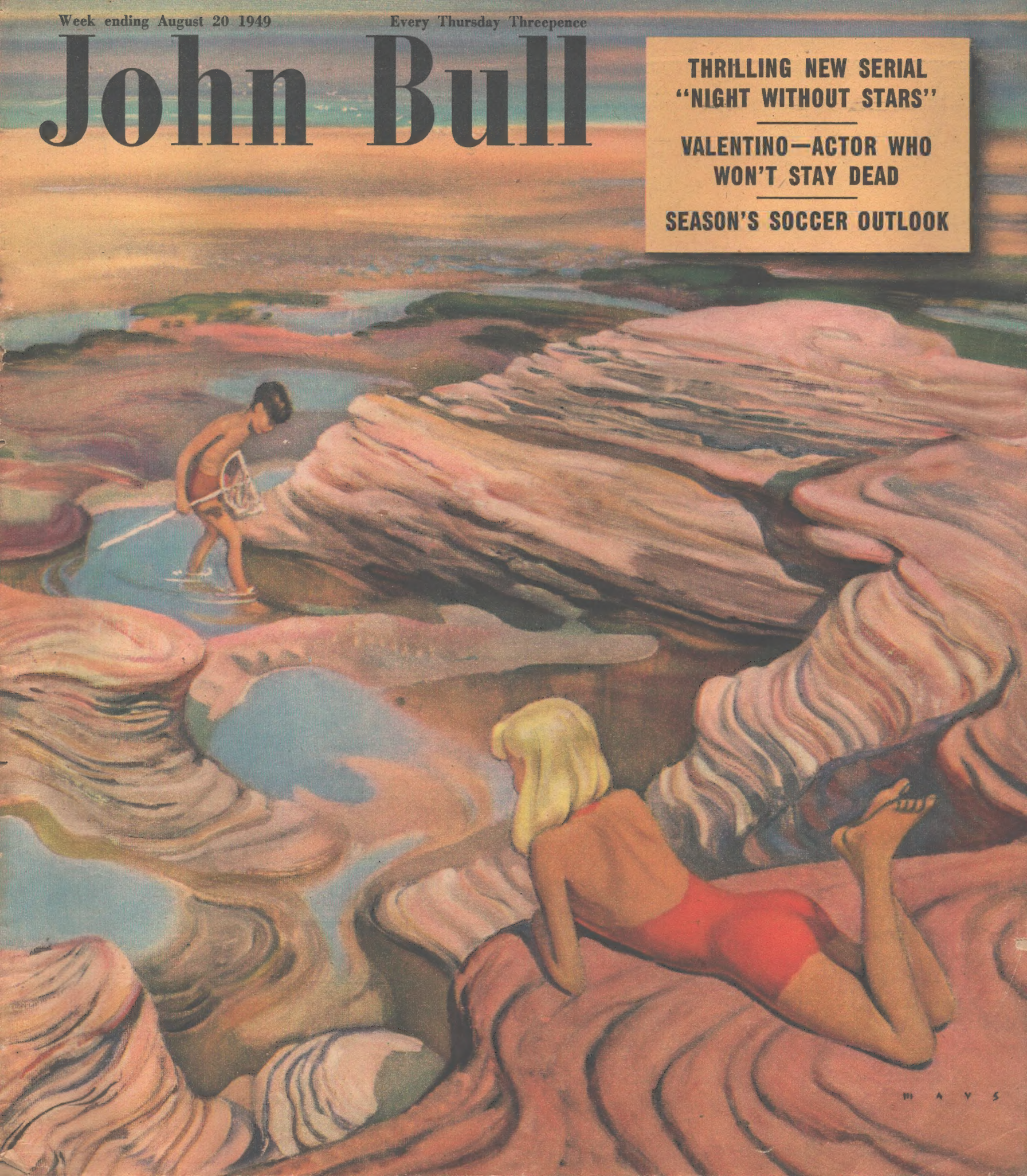

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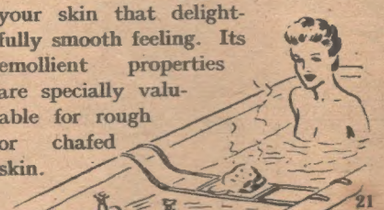

21

Cuticura
SOAP

EDITORIAL

Festivals are good fun, and good business

WHEN, TWO YEARS AGO, Edinburgh launched its first Festival of Music and Drama, the Scottish capital started something bigger than its citizens perhaps realized.

The fashion for festivals has caught on. It has spread southwards to several great cities of England. It looks like becoming more than a fashion. . . .

For the biggest of them all, the Festival of Britain in 1951, will, if it achieves the success promised by its ambitious planning, confirm the new conception of the great festival and make this a permanent part of our national life.

There is no doubt that festivals are good business. Lord Provost Murray remarked after last year's Edinburgh Festival that, although it officially lost £11,000, it had brought so much extra trade to the city that they looked on it as a very profitable event.

So much for the money-making side. There are the aesthetic and educational sides to be remembered as well. And, at a time when we are striving to close our obstinate dollar gap, there is also the consideration of attracting more overseas tourists, particularly from North America.

The Government wants us to earn eventually £150 million a year from American visitors. If, instead of a vaguely interesting tour of Great Britain's more hackneyed sights, we can invite them to focus their holidays on a specific attraction such as the Edinburgh Festival, they are much more likely to make the expensive effort of crossing the Atlantic.

And there is no doubt that the festival is a most suitable way of displaying the special fascinations of this country to visitors.

SUPREMELY rich in history and the arts, we need only modern showmanship and clever organization to sell these assets to the world on a huge and increasing scale.

Edinburgh is again justifiably emphasizing Scottish traditions this year. While she presents concerts by Europe's finest orchestras, ballet from England and France and opera from everywhere, she offers Scottish plays, music and dancing which give a distinctive atmosphere to this international gathering.

The skirl of the bagpipes echoing down the Long Mile of the ancient Scots capital will remain in visitors' memories long after the strains of classical music—which they could, after all, hear in their own land or county—have faded from memory.

That is all to the good, for the background of tradition is an important part of the show. The fact is that the British people have found in the best of their new festivals a form of showmanship which can distribute wealth as well as culture all over this island.

At present the festival idea has found expression mainly at such centres as Bath, Cheltenham and Norwich — but it can and should spread over the whole of the country.

Perhaps one day, for example, the scope of the Welsh National Eisteddfod will be broadened into a Festival of Wales at Cardiff. There might also be a North of England Festival at Harrogate, a Midlands Festival at Birmingham and so on.

There is no doubt, from the postwar experience of Edinburgh and other cities, that festivals are good fun, that they afford first-class education and wonderful publicity and that they can make money.

But they have, of course, another side, full of harsh practical problems. Having been drawn to a festival city, visitors must be catered for adequately.

This is a problem which, we are bound to say, Edinburgh has not yet solved. It would be a very rash overseas tourist who landed in Princes Street with his baggage but no "reservations." He would probably end up in the famous gardens!

Doubts are already being expressed as to whether London will be able to board all the visitors expected in 1951. Edinburgh this month is nearly doubling its population. London hopes for a million visitors. Not even the metropolis can possibly absorb all those people in comfort unless something drastic is done to increase the accommodation.

Such suggestions as to open motor-car camps beside main roads, though no doubt practicable, will not go far to house the great multitude which is coming from the ends of the earth. Other expedients, such as mooring passenger liners in the Thames, may have to be tried.

And it will certainly be necessary to organize, well in advance, a gigantic system of private hospitality. Ordinary homes which are prepared to take paying guests in 1951 should be inspected and registered.

It is important that this part of the Festival of Britain should be remembered now and planned thoroughly.

The lessons of Edinburgh must be closely studied. If, in its third year, that Festival organization still makes any mistakes, let the rest of Britain, and London in particular, profit by them in 1951.

JOHN BULL 189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1

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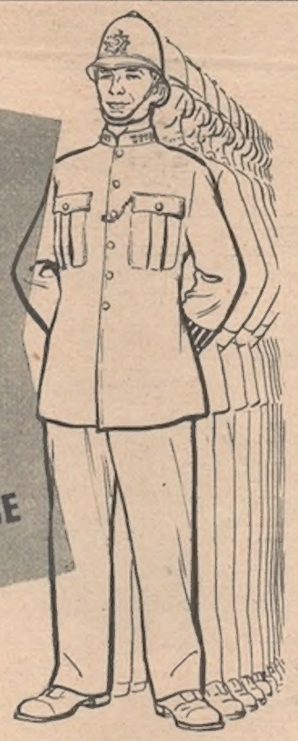

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... but still her nails stay lovely!

With L'Onglex, long-lasting loveliness for nails can be yours in two minutes. The hardest jobs about the house do not harm the glass-hard glossy finish which L'Onglex gives to nails.

PRICE 1/3 L'Onglex Liquid NAIL POLISH

IN 6 SMART SHADES

Which kind of INDIGESTION do YOU get?

Like Uncle Will? "ACID STOMACH" USED TO KEEP HIM AWAKE

Like Aunt Katie? SOMETIMES CAN'T EAT WHAT SHE FANCIES

Like Brenda? SHE SOMETIMES GETS UPSET BY MISSING PROPER MEALS

They all get quick relief with

BISURATED TRADE MARK Magnesia

Many kinds of indigestion are caused by excess acidity—which is quickly corrected by 'Bisurated' Magnesia. 1/9 and 3/7 in Tablet or Powder form (plain or mint-flavoured). If your indigestion trouble persists, you should get medical advice

Free Speech

PITY THE POOR TOURIST!

THANKS FOR YOUR editorial, "Taking care of our visitors" (JOHN BULL, July 30). As an Italian girl I can say how disappointed I was during my first few days spent here.

Prices are too high for anybody who is not a millionaire; one's feet have to be aching before a place to rest is found; and, though food is short, what there is could certainly be served in a cleaner and more appetizing way.

England has lovely spots of unsurpassed natural beauty. But visitors must eat and rest, too.—L. S., Derby.

. . . Recently on a motor coach trip I was amazed to realize that, as we passed through the towns and villages, hardly any of the passengers knew where we were. Why not a bold sign at the entrance to each town, announcing the name?—T. E. JENKINS, 25 James Street, Pontardulais, Glam.

. . . At 4 a.m. last Sunday morning, I cleaned my teeth in the River Wye. So did my husband and six-year-old daughter. I hope the trout didn't suffer, but, after travelling overnight in a long-distance coach, we needed a clean-up. The coach depot was closed and there were no cafés or women's conveniences open.

Presumably the natural functions are not allowed to function in Hereford after 10 p.m. Pity the poor tourist who has not been warned!—JOAN SEAGER, 1 Newburgh Road, Highworth, near Swindon, Wilts.

. . . The great fault with a large number of hotels in Scottish holiday resorts is that the proprietor has been a barman, tied to some brewer, and knows practically nothing except how to serve up drinks. If the bar is doing well, he does not bother about the food, which is often poor and scanty, so that guests have to augment their meals by buying food outside.—R. J. P., Fife.

Dodging The Ladder

AFTER READING the Rev. P. Burnell's letter on superstition (JOHN BULL, July 23), I spent half my lunch hour on a balcony in a small Yorkshire town. On the opposite footpath, a ladder was standing outside a shop. In thirty minutes, 508 people, many with perambulators, walked round the ladder. No one walked under it. To get round it, pedestrians had to step into the road with their backs to the traffic. They did so, some cheerfully, some almost religiously.—J. W. H., Halifax.

Making Tennis Cheaper

I WOULD LIKE TO PLAY TENNIS much more. But the fee for the courts is two shillings an hour. This works out fairly cheaply if we play doubles but sometimes we want to play singles. Why can't we have morning sessions for children at a shilling a court, while their elders are at work?

Better still, why don't schools that have courts let children play on them at sixpence an hour during the holidays? The money would help pay for the upkeep.—JOYCE WILSON (aged 14), 83 Aston Road, Willenhall, Staffs.

Furniture From Sawdust

STANLEY RUSSELL'S article, "Duke of the course" (JOHN BULL, July 30) mentions the Duke of Richmond's unsolved problem of how to make profitable use of sawdust. I have seen ordinary household buckets and coal scuttles made from sawdust mixed with a cheap glue or cementing agent and moulded into the required shape. With suitable moulds, light ornamental furniture could be made.—THOMAS F. COLLINS, 6 Elba Crescent, Crymlyn Burrows, Swansea.

More Sunbathing Secrets

MY FRIEND, Jill Maitland, and I took this photo (with a self-operating shutter) after our first eight-hour day of Jersey sunshine. After supper I picked up JOHN BULL and found that, according to Dr. Harvey Graham ("The secret of sunbathing," July 16), we were both in for a long spell in a darkened room with "intense reddening of the skin, giving way to painful blistering" because we had omitted to take the precaution of sunning ourselves for "only fifteen minutes back and front the first day, with half an hour each way the next day."

Jill (right) and Mary

Actually we were both a pleasant golden brown. I never redden in the sun; nor do a number of people I know. It's surely an individual matter. Doctors should advise people to experiment and determine their own reaction.—MISS MARY MINCK, West Cromwell Road, London, S.W.

*** *Dr. Harvey Graham writes: My article was obviously intended to help the sort of sunbather who—unlike this lucky reader—is liable to suffer.*

Demobbed In A Shirt

FIVE OF MY SONS were in the Forces during the war. Two of them gave their lives and a third spent three years in a Japanese prison camp. Now my sixth son has arrived home in a pair of flannel trousers and a silk shirt in which he travelled over two hundred miles after demobilization.

He was turned out in these clothes in heavy rain because he refused to pay £3 14s. for the threadbare uniform issued to him nearly two years and five months ago. They left him his shoes. Apparently the R.A.F. consider this suitable clothing for a boy just flown home from Equatorial Africa.—WIDOW, Glasgow.

Boy-Girl And Girl-Boy

SURELY NO OTHER two people have had this experience. A few years ago, I needed a birth certificate and found that I was registered as "Theodore," a boy, instead of "Theodora," a girl. My father had to go to a lawyer and it cost a guinea to get the mistake put right.

Now my husband has had to apply for a certificate and found that instead of being "Willie," a boy, he was "Nellie," a girl. As he has no parents living he has had to search for people who could swear they knew him as a baby. — MRS. THEODORA EVANS, 43 Mill Street, Greasboro', near Rotherham.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address is in the letter.

ROYAL BABIES

Every mother feels that nothing but the best is good enough for her baby, and she is right. During the early formative years the most important single factor is correct feeding. This is where, above everything else, a mother must insist on her baby's having the best, and nothing but the best.

Baby must have in his daily bottle a full quota of fat, carbohydrates, proteins, minerals and vitamins, all in exactly the right proportions.

If natural feeding fails, the food in which these vital requirements are most perfectly met is COW & GATE Milk Food.

This food, which has become world famous as the "Food of Royal Babies," is prepared by a special process which provides all the essential constituents in the correct proportions for steady, sturdy growth. It is also fortified by the addition of Vitamin D and iron.

Thousands of babies now grown up to perfect manhood and womanhood testify to the sure foundations of good health laid by this superlative food.

Thousands still on the food have "That COW & GATE Look" of perfect health which should be every child's birthright.

We all know that a Royal Baby is bound to be given the best that is obtainable. Twelve Royal Babies to date have been fed on COW & GATE. Can you do better for your baby?

Have the lifelong happiness and satisfaction of knowing that your baby also had the best that money could buy, and the best possible start in life. Get a tin from your chemist to-day.

The new abridged Edition of "MOTHERHOOD" is now available. Send 6d. in stamps for your copy to Cow & Gate Ltd., Dept. J.B., Guildford, Surrey.

COW & GATE LTD.
GUILDFORD

FILM on teeth invites decay . . .

Film-soiled teeth spell DANGER. Film harbours nearly all the germs that breed decay. Only Pepsodent contains Irium, which frees teeth from film

Do you know why teeth decay? Most often because dingy film forms on them, gives shelter to destructive germs.

Run your tongue over *your* teeth. Feel a sticky film there? That film forms from food deposits and saliva. In it, germs produce acids that attack the enamel of your teeth.

Film is continually being deposited on your teeth. *You can remove it with Pepsodent.* No toothpaste except Pepsodent has Irium, specially made to emulsify and wash away stubborn, ever-forming film.

Brush teeth with Pepsodent after every meal. Visit your dentist twice a year. *Keep* your teeth white and film-free, and reduce the risk of decay.

NEW PEPSODENT is extra-foamy, extra-quick. You'll find your teeth *whiter*, while Pepsodent's lovely minty taste brings clean freshness to your mouth and breath.

. . . the Irium in *Pepsodent* fights film

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"Precious Cargo"

MICKEY and Molly know their minds where sweets are concerned. MAYFAIR Toffees and Chocolates are indeed "precious cargo" to them . . . such delicious flavour, such exciting variety, such attractive wrappings . . . and every "quarter" full value for money.

Ask for MAYFAIR and VANITY FAIR Assortments!

Mayfair
TOFFEES & CHOCOLATES

MADE BY MAYFAIR PRODUCTS LTD. SUNDERLAND.

Spend less time at the sink!

Less Rubbing, Scrubbing— Yet a Spotless, Shining Home with time-and-labour-saving BROBAT SUDS!

Let BROBAT SUDS lighten, brighten and ease all your washing and house-cleaning tasks for evermore! BROBAT SUDS new, livelier, longer-lasting lather simply demolishes dirt—rolls out every particle from fabrics, covers, net curtains and, of course, the weekly family wash. And BROBAT SUDS improved degreasing and detergent powers make this the perfect washer for speedy washing-up and all-round-the-house wet cleaning!

BROBAT *Suds*

From all good grocers, hardware and multiple stores, Timothy Whites & Taylors, Boots and Co-operative Societies.

You can always enjoy Weston's Oval Arrowroot

With the early cup of tea, with morning coffee, at 4 o'clock and very last thing. Not too plain, not too sweet, and easy to digest. Made from the finest ingredients obtainable, and sent from the factories, oven-fresh and temptingly crisp.

Weston's
BISCUITS

Lovely Sparkling Eyes!

Valopto is a scientific blending of gentle antiseptics and soothing plant extracts. For regular eye hygiene: for minor troubles such as styes, inflammation, colds in the eye. At chemists, 2/6. For serious troubles consult a doctor at once.

A woman's eyes mirror her whole make-up. Beauty Experts say, make eye-care with Valopto a *daily duty* for 3 reasons: for *protection* against infection: for *relief* from strain, tiredness and soreness: for *added lustre* and clearness. Start using Valopto today. *He* will admire the sparkling new beauty of your eyes.

Valopto Eye Lotion

'Oral'

Shoes for women

are graceful, stylish and particularly comfortable. They are the ideal shoes for the housewife and businesswoman. *Ask for them by name.*

'Oral'- *Makers of good shoes* - Rushden, Northants.

Whitbread in bottle is beer *in its prime*

KEEP SOME AT HOME

WHITBREAD & CO. LTD., 27 BRITANNIA STREET, KING'S CROSS, W.C.1

The children are eating more Hovis and honey . . .

to keep their strength up the natural way

THE BETTER-BALANCED BREAD **Hovis**

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I like a man to smoke a pipe

... and I enjoy a pipeful

OF

AFRIKANDER

3/7 PER OZ

Fitting for men

Spire

A G.T. WHITE *Shoe*

A good looking brogue for town or holiday wear. In Tan suede at 54/-

Write for name of nearest Agent. . . . George T. White Shoe Co. Ltd. Leicester

PHOSFERINE

for *extra* vitality!

Lack of vitality is a familiar symptom today. Lots of people need a tonic. If this is your case—take PHOSFERINE for a day or two. This will revive your appetite and encourage good digestion. Good digestion enriches the blood, feeds the nerves, builds strength. So take PHOSFERINE for *extra* vitality—resilience, confidence!

Available in liquid or tablet form. 1'6 and 3'8.

THE GREATEST OF ALL TONICS

for Depression, Debility, Indigestion, Sleeplessness & after Influenza

Which flavour do you favour?

Gooseberry cream, praline pâté, caramel, coffee cream, turkish delight, and nougat! It's not easy to choose— so break and come again every break's a lucky one!

SIX DIFFERENT CHOCOLATES ON EVERY CALEY TRAY

T20

THE MAN WHO TOOK A CHANCE

by ***HENRY FIRTH***

Paul and Vera Hart: few customers guessed the cover girl on his catalogue was his wife

Who says Britain today is a land of no opportunity? This is the story of Paul Hart, bulb farmer. Five years ago all was against him. Now he's his own boss—and a success

I MET PAUL HART IN THE packing shed. The gladioli had just finished and now they had 50,000 dahlias to get out in the next ten days. They'd been hard at it since seven in the morning.

Hart showed me his latest idea—the small wooden boxes he'd just started using for sending the plants through the post. "Of course, they cost me a few pence extra," he said, "but I think they'll be worth it."

There was pride of proprietorship in his voice. It was a justifiable pride, for in this nation of gardeners, the Paul Hart bulb farm was already on the way to becoming something of an institution.

Yet, only five years ago, this man had nothing. He had, in fact, a good deal less than nothing.

His Plane Crashed

In 1940 ex-radio store buyer Hart was training as a fighter pilot in the R.A.F. Finally came the last flight before passing out. His plane crashed on the hills of Wales. When he got clear of the flames his face had gone.

Paul Hart became one of the first of the celebrated "guinea-pigs" of Sir Archibald McIndoe. He was a formidable job even for this wonder-working plastic surgeon.

McIndoe cut a flap from Paul Hart's forehead and turned it down to build a nose. Skin from his thighs filled the gap on the forehead. His eyebrows came from his arms.

Then, month by month, the new nose was trimmed and moulded. "In the end," says Hart, "I got so used to it I'd rather have them do something to my face than have a tooth filled."

There were twenty-five operations in all—the last of them only eighteen months ago. After the first three and a half years of it Paul Hart left the plastic hospital at East Grinstead, with his new face, to go on sick leave.

He left with McIndoe's advice ringing in his ears: "Try for an outdoor job, otherwise parts of your face may turn yellow."

Started New Life

It was tulip time when Paul Hart arrived at his aunt's home near Spalding. The flat expanses of "Little Holland" were aflame with colour, a vast striped carpet rolling away as far as the eye could see. "I took a very good view of it," says Paul Hart.

At the end of his leave he went back to the plastic hospital at East Grinstead and told the other guinea-pigs that he had found his new life. He was going to grow bulbs for a living. "What," they said through their bandages, "electric light bulbs?"

But Paul Hart had never been more in earnest. A townsman born and bred, what he knew about bulbs at this time could have been written on one side of a postage stamp. But a man can learn.

He swotted bulb textbooks, pored over market prices, went from bulb grower to bulb grower, absorbing their wisdom. Then he attached himself to a good Dutch firm for six months' practical training.

It was round this time that he struck the

first big obstacle. In this strange land of dykes and slow-flowing rivers—reclaimed from the sea by the great Dutch engineers—there are around 1,500 acres of precious "half-silt loam"—the secret, both here and in Holland, of successful bulb cultivation.

This golden earth fetches from £200 to £300 an acre. Naturally, it is not to be picked up every day.

Next Problem: Money

The hunt was on. Every spare moment that he could snatch from the job on the Dutch bulb farm, Paul Hart spent prowling the Fenland hedgerows, talking to farmers, listening to the gossip in the pubs. In the end he managed to track down five acres, to rent, nicely situated off the London Road, Spalding.

The next obstacle was money. You need around £1,000 to start up as a bulb man.

Paul had nowhere near that sum, but he managed to borrow enough to buy his first 100,000 bulbs: the foundation of what he hoped would be his fortune.

In October, 1944, he planted them in half an acre.

Bulbs propagate themselves by pushing out tiny new bulbs. But when Nature goes into mass production, the conveyor belt can't be speeded up.

The tiny new bulbs have to be taken up and replanted. Then taken up and replanted—taken up and replanted again and again. This process goes on until, in maybe three years, they are what the bulb men call "top size"—with a full-size flower inside ready for planting out to bloom in the indifferent soil of any suburban garden.

It is this constant planting and replanting which makes bulbs expensive and bulb farming such a back-breaking business.

And Paul Hart was a city man, an ex-radio buyer.

He bought a little hand tractor, but it turned out to be the wrong type. It nearly shook him to bits in his struggle to hold it steady. Those early furrows were far from straight. Then he got a horse named Daisy. But Daisy died on him.

In those first months, the yearly round of bulb farming was woven into the fabric of Paul Hart's life. There was the planting of potatoes which should precede the first bulb crop.

There was "roguing" — working swiftly over the carpet of blooms, scooping out with a two-prong fork any that had turned out the wrong colour.

There was "heading"—sweeping through with a knife and basket, flicking off the blooms with a flick of the wrist.

Sudden Wilderness

"Pretty devastating, the first time you see 'heading,'" says Paul Hart. "A magnificent mass of blooms, swaying in the wind, one moment, and a wilderness of straggly stalks the next."

But every bulb farmer knows that whatever happens you must prevent the petals falling on the bulbs and setting up the disease that will rot them. And for Paul Hart, bulb farmer, heading soon took its place in the routine cycle of operations.

Planting . . . lifting . . . grading . . . planting. Between spring bulbs — gladioli, begonias, anemones — and autumn bulbs the only slack times were around Christmas, before the January early flower forcing, and in June, between the end of the dahlias and the start of the tulip-lifting.

Grading the lifted bulbs, shaking them through riddles of various sizes, was a heart-breaking business. The first year it took a month. No pioneer breaking virgin lands ever worked harder than Paul Hart on his five acres.

He ate bulbs, talked bulbs, slept bulbs.

After the scarcity of the war years, prices were good. But the bulb growers of Spalding could see a question mark on their horizon. To reduce the effect of possible market fluctuations Paul Hart decided that, unlike most bulb growers, he would sell direct to the public.

In August, 1947, he had the pleasure of reading his first advertisement in a London newspaper. It was two inches long.

"Paul R. Hart, Specialist in Bulb Culture. . . . Buy from the ACTUAL GROWER. . . ."

Loss On First Year

But no rush developed. "I don't mind admitting now," says Paul Hart, "I made a loss on the first year. . . ." It looked like being a long, hard pull ahead.

Then, suddenly, out of the blue, Opportunity presented itself in the quaint disguise of Wilfred Pickles, come to Spalding to make a "Battle of Britain" week edition of *Have A Go!*

At the suggestion of the R.A.F. Association, of which he was a life member, Paul Hart made his way to the Corn Exchange and was duly interviewed by the maestro before the microphone.

Of course, the story of the bulb farm came out.

"And how are things now, lad?" said Wilfred.

"Could do with a few more customers," said Paul.

At the end of the interview, the warm-hearted Pickles, brushing aside the B.B.C.'s No Advertising rules in a good cause, boomed, "And if you're wanting any bulbs, Paul Hart of Spalding will find him."

In the middle of April, 1948—six months after the recording—the programme came over the air, and, to Paul Hart's astonishment, the puff was still in it. The letters began to arrive almost at once.

On the repeat programme, the producer overruled Pickles. There could be no exceptions to the No Advertising rule. This misfortune was actually another stroke of luck. For now the Press seized on the issue, berating the B.B.C. for its bureaucratic heavy-handedness. Readers wrote in indignant letters.

The argument was good for trade. The postman staggered up to the farm on London Road, Spalding. Altogether there were three thousand letters—and a good many contained orders.

"At that point," says Paul Hart, looking back, "I could have done two things. Either I could just have carried on as I was, or I could seize the opportunity with both hands and go for it hell for leather. . . ."

Hell for leather it was. Hart borrowed more capital, arranged for a new catalogue to be printed in full colour.

It was an attractive piece of publicity. On the cover a girl in blue stood in the middle of a field of tulips holding a big basketful of blooms.

Though few customers guessed it, the girl on the cover was Paul Hart's wife, Vera, who had left her job in a city office to marry him and share the adventure of building a bulb farm. Vera Hart took over the office—a big job and a key job in a mail order concern of this sort.

"Feel You Can Breathe"

Twice a year there were 150,000 catalogues to go out — with the "Wilfred Pickles" Selection in the centre. "Vera's at least half the business," says Paul.

Vera Hart herself is still wondering a little at the ease with which she has taken to this strange new life. "I thought I should never be able to live in the country," she told me. "But now I would never go back to the town. It's more *real* here, somehow. You feel you can breathe. You can expand. . . ."

At last the bulb farm really began to take firm shape. The first machinery appeared: addressing machinery for the office and a bulb grading machine which now did in four days the work which had previously taken a month.

But there was no cushioned ease for the Harts. Work started at 7 a.m. most days and went on until ten at night.

Becomes Your Whole Life

When I saw them they were just about to take their first holiday since the farm started—running their stand at Olympia, their first appearance at a big national show.

"That's the big thing," says Paul Hart. "If you decide to start on a job like this, to build a business, you've got to be ready for that job to become your whole life—in the early years at least."

Not that there haven't been compensations. For bulb farming has its own peculiar satisfactions. There's that morning, for instance, in late winter, when the snow melts from your fields, and, there, underneath the warm, dissolving coat, are the tulip shoots just peeping from the earth, line after line of fresh green, running dead straight, absolutely evenly spaced. . . .

There's the joy of taking up a new variety and watching to see what sort of a "dooer" it's going to be, what sort of a bloom it produces. . . .

Greatest of all, perhaps, there's the satisfaction of being your own master, of having built up your own business from nothing by your own sweat and your own ingenuity.

"I'm very satisfied," says Paul Hart. "It's not a get-rich-quick business. But now that it's got going at last, it's a *good* business."

Of course, it isn't all plain sailing, even now. Bulbs are a luxury, and the business may be hit by slumps. And there's the bogey of the spivs of the business who get bulbs a bad name by selling worthless undeveloped specimens at "bargain" prices.

Nearly Flooded Out

And in any sort of farming—even bulb farming—you have the vagaries of Nature to reckon with. There was the day the Harts came home to find sandbags piled down the centre of their road.

Thanks to a slight rise in the ground, and the Sherman tanks rushed into the breach, the floods just missed their precious acres.

But today the young man who started off five years ago with scarcely any assets save his own determination has fourteen prosperous acres, six women and two men employees, a steadily expanding clientele of enthusiastic gardeners all over Britain, and a business that gets better every year.

There are pictures of bulbs in every room of the house, and, framed in the hall, a cheque from Wilfred Pickles for the sum of one guinea.

Is Opportunity dead in postwar Britain? Do brains and determination come up against a stone wall? Is "setting up on your own" a mug's game in present conditions?

Paul and Vera Hart do not think so.

IN JOHN BULL

DOES LIFE GET YOU DOWN? . . .

The Rev. W. E. PURCELL suggests how we can fight an "invisible malady"

FORCED LABOUR IN RUSSIA . . .

EDWARD CRANKSHAW describes Stalin's industrial "press-gang" system

Make sure of your John Bull every week by placing a regular order with your newsagent

NEXT WEEK

Tangier waterfront: eight nations share the bossing of the enclave—and the only unit that appears to run at all smoothly is the lighthouse!

City of many nations

by IAN BEVAN

Ideally, "international" Tangier should be a world model. In fact, the Powers watch one another suspiciously, while the people make the most of an odd set-up

"TANGIER," THEY TOLD me before I left London, "is a place where anything can happen." In Paris they warned me I was on my way to "the double-cross-roads of Europe." In Casablanca I heard that Tangier was a sink of iniquity, a cesspool of vice, a resort of loose women, smugglers and international crooks.

I arrived expecting to be shocked, swindled and seduced. Instead, the first invitation I had was to see the local repertory group's production of *Hay Fever*. The secret was out. Anything can happen here, but almost nothing ever does.

This is a small community where teacup gossip is the main occupation, amateur theatricals the sole diversion, and making money the only industry.

It is a community on which Britain has to keep watchful eyes, for it stands opposite Gibraltar, at the entrance to the Mediterranean, and everything that goes on is carefully noted by the Foreign Office.

Britain has a big say in running the town. Several lucky Britons have important property interests, and about a thousand British expatriates have found it a peaceful retreat in which to spend their declining years. There is nothing startlingly beautiful or wildly exciting about the place, but there is one thing which lends a certain attraction. Tangier is crazy, quite crazy in the most pleasant sort of way.

In fact, if they are ever looking for a city motto, I suggest a paraphrase of the ticket agency's slogan: "You want the craziest situations; we have them."

Eccentrics' Paradise

As a general rule, anybody can do anything he likes short of murder. That means it is "a natural" for eccentrics who have flocked in from the ends of the earth and made this their paradise.

From Brussels has come the countess who is afraid of burglars, so she keeps her bedroom full of parrots trained to shriek at a pin-drop. It is nerve-shattering but effective.

From Paris has come a well-known publisher, who hates authors but likes designing invitation cards, so he has started a job-printing business.

From New York has come the youthful lecturer in economics who has tired of too much civilization. He has bought a house in the Kasbah, settled down happily among the Arabs, and found a job shaking cocktails in one of the town's many little bars.

The chief interest of Tangier should be the so-called "noble experiment in international rule" which makes the city and its small surrounding zone unique in the world. But in fact Tangier offers a further demonstration that, for the present, nationalism conquers all.

The city is a part of Morocco but, since 1923, it has been an international enclave ruled by the resident consul-generals of foreign Powers. The nations with a finger in the pie are Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United States. Anybody of these nationalities can go to Tangier whenever he likes and stay as long as he likes, without visas or permits.

Since 1945 the Soviet has also had the right to join the mêlée, but so far has stayed away. Possibly the Russians don't want to be caught sitting at the same conference table with a representative of Franco Spain, or possibly they don't want to place themselves in a situation where they would be consistently out-voted eight to one.

While the eight-nation Committee of Control is not "international rule" in the strict sense, at least it might be regarded as a beginning. Unfortunately the only thing that works smoothly is the separate international commission which runs the nearby Cape Spartel lighthouse.

This has been functioning without any serious hitch since 1865, mainly because the sole problem in running a lighthouse is to keep it alight. The problems of a city are more complicated.

An obvious reason why the city does not get the same smooth administration as the lighthouse is that the men in charge are diplomats, not administrators. As the eight nations persist in sending career diplomats to run the show, it must be assumed their real object is to preserve national interests and not to make this a shining example of co-operative achievement.

Even in their diplomacy, most nations don't do very well. They chop and change appointments so that at any given moment there are always several representatives uninitiated in the ways of Morocco.

Top-ranker From Spain

An outstanding exception is Spain, which has one of its top-ranking diplomats, Señor Cristobal del Castillo, occupying the nominally low-ranking post of consul-general. The Spaniards want Tangier and they are doing everything they can to get it. They claim that it is essentially a Spanish town and should be a part of Spanish Morocco.

The French say that Tangier should be a part of French Morocco; the British point out that their interests go back to 1661 when, for twenty-two years, this was British territory; and the Americans will not admit that anything belongs to anybody.

The United States, alone among world Powers, has refused to recognize the division of Morocco into two protectorates and an international

Scandal is a main occupation in Tangier. To hear what's new you go to Dean's Bar. Dean (above) will know all the details

Tangier's market place. With money rates changing daily and over five currencies to choose from, shopping is complicated

zone, and maintains extra-territorial rights.

If they want to do anything in Tangier, the Americans just go ahead and do it. At the moment, without craving anybody's permission or begging their pardon, they are building a powerful radio station to relay the Voice of America propaganda broadcasts into Iron Curtain countries.

The Spaniards whisper in your ear that the Americans would like to make this their Gibraltar, so that Great Britain and U.S.A. between them could dominate the Straits.

The French say the Spanish Government is buying property here as fast as it can so that it will have a stronger claim to be the controlling Power when and if the international treaty comes up for revision.

Catch-as-catch-can

In this atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion, the administration lurches on from day to day while hard-headed business men run riot in a catch-as-catch-can world.

The international zone is a paradise for big business. There are practically no controls, and only comparatively small fixed taxes, on companies. More than 2,000 have been registered in the past ten years, most of them nominal holding companies for businesses hundreds or even thousands of miles away.

By the simple trick of having their head office in Tangier, these companies can sidestep many of the more irritating restrictions in the countries where they operate, and also evade taxation.

The international zone is a free money market, where you can buy or sell any recognized currency. Respectable, and not so respectable, financial institutions from all over the world have taken advantage of this and set up branches.

There is no official register of banks, but the telephone book lists twenty-seven.

An official at the city administrator's office told me there are thirty-four "institutions called banks," but added, "of course, that figure is not final; every man in Tangier is a banker."

The currency market operates as simply as the London Stock Exchange. Representatives of the town's banks meet each morning in a picture theatre to buy and sell money. Most of the business is in Spanish pesetas and French Moroccan francs (the town's everyday currencies), and in U.S. dollars, Swiss francs and sterling.

Shopping Hazards

When the bankers have finished their haggling, their closing rates become the official rates for the rest of the day at the banks, shops and money changers. Rates can fluctuate violently and unexpectedly, so most people protect themselves by keeping four or five separate bank accounts for different currencies.

Cheque forms are printed without currency signs and you fill in the word "dollars" or "francs" or whatever it is, when you fill in the amount. An indispensable piece of equipment on any business man's desk is a slide rule to do the complicated sums translating one currency into another in terms of both their values in a third.

Every housewife takes a notebook with her when she goes shopping so that she can be sure the price of eggs at the Spanish grocers (quoted in pesetas) is no higher than the price at the French grocers (in French Moroccan francs).

Before she can be sure of a simple thing like that, she has to find out the day's exchange rate between francs and pesetas. Naturally enough, the rates are the first item everyone turns to in the morning paper.

It is necessary to shop around to get the best value even in postage. There are three post offices: one British, one Spanish, and one French Moroccan. The cheapest airmail to England is at the British post office, but the cheapest airmail to U.S.A. is via Spain.

Most people, including the French and the Spaniards, prefer to have their inwards mail addressed to the British post office. There is less chance that way, they feel, of anyone else reading it.

A good fifth of the city's 120,000 population are living in wretched mud-and-straw hovels, without sanitation and without prospects of getting anything better.

Meanwhile, money is being poured into building luxury apartment houses. Rents are uncontrolled, so that, despite astronomic building costs, speculators can cover their original investments in three years.

The tax situation is one of the many crazy aspects of life. There is no income tax and practically no direct taxation of any kind.

The bulk of the city's public revenue comes from import duties at a flat rate of twelve and a half per cent, but here again the rich have scored a victory. On many luxury imports the rate is only seven and a half per cent.

It's the rich who get the pleasure in this town all right, and the poor who take the blame. To be rich in Tangier is to be comfortable indeed. Servants are plentiful. The free money market allows an inhabitant to buy American cars, French silks, Persian carpets, or what he likes.

All Off The Ration

Nothing is rationed, or at least the administrator's office thinks not. There was an attempt to ration bread and olive oil during the war, and no one is sure if the controls have been officially lifted. It doesn't matter. You can buy as much bread and oil, and indeed as much of anything else, as you can afford to pay for.

Life is physically and intellectually limited by the size of the zone and the smallness of the community, but that is the way Tangerines (which is what they call themselves) like it.

"You get as ingrown as a toe nail here," is the way one man put it to me, "but nobody wants to move out into the big, wide world. Life's too much of a struggle out there. Here you relax and enjoy it."

Everybody discusses what everybody else is doing, but gossip is relayed as a matter of casual interest, without any note of censure or vindictiveness.

The usual thing is to drop into

Continued on page 12

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

by B. L. JACOT

ILLUSTRATED BY NARRAWAY

You'd think that any man fool enough to cross the old lady would obey the rule of once bitten, twice shy. But not Constable Slaughter. He took the long way round to discover that it didn't pay to meddle

Slaughter struggled to his feet. His face was purple. "I'll have the law on all of you for this!" he cried

EVEN A RETIRED SCHOOLMISTRESS is entitled to a white lie now and again. And really it was a very small one. And in a good cause.

Police Constable Slaughter stopped at my gate to rest his bicycle against my garden wall, and tugged at a handkerchief to mop his brow. It's an uphill climb to Little Hawtry—that's the old farmhouse where Miss Anthony lives.

"She's gone to London," I said. "I can save you the trouble of going up to see."

"London or not, I've my duty to do," the constable replied. "And I'm going to do it—whatever people say."

"The dog is only a puppy," I told him. "Every dog should have a chance. It's the law that the first bite doesn't count."

"Not the law as I knows it." Police Constable Slaughter is no doubt a fine, upright man with a keen sense of duty. I am prepared to love everyone, but I find it a little hard to love him. He never looks straight at anything and sneaking sideways glimpses on the sly has given his eye a suspicious, piggy look.

"Miss Anthony is crazy about the creature," I pointed out.

"Can't help that. The Bench says it's to be destroyed."

"She took it to her heart right from the start when it was given her six months ago as a tiny, fluffy little pup."

"It wasn't a tiny pup when it savaged an officer of the law."

I laid down my trowel and went closer. "*Savaged!* You walked up to the front door and the dog bit you. He doesn't like policemen, and anyway he was only protecting the house."

A look of mulish satisfaction crossed the constable's face. "That is," he said ponderously, "as may be. Twice the Bench has ordered the dog to be destroyed and twice she's refused. If she hasn't carried out the court's order *this* time, I'm ordered to carry it out myself."

MY heart gave a jump, then dropped. I was thinking of Zero. The only person he ever bit was P.C. Slaughter. He's the softest-hearted, pottiest little Alsatian in all Berkshire. He just doesn't like policemen, or maybe he just doesn't like P.C. Slaughter.

"It'll break Miss Anthony's heart," I told him. "She—she won't survive it."

"People survive a lot of things," the officer said.

"You mean—you're going to kill Zero? *Now?*"

"I have had orders to shoot the animal if still undestroyed." He glanced at a parcel roped on to the carrier of his machine, a Service revolver. I had never believed—till then—the story about him kicking a cat to death. P.C. Slaughter was troubled at his cottage by stray cats and he hung dead cats round his garden to discourage the live ones. *That* I knew, because I could see for myself, as could anyone. Now I believed the other story, too.

"Can't stop talking here all day," he added.

As he pushed on up the hill the front door of my cottage opened a crack. I made a sign behind my back. When he was right out of sight we hurried Zero across the orchard to the car. He is such an intelligent creature—he never made a sound. But he knew what was overhanging him, poor dog!

"Thank you for keeping him talking," Sarah Anthony breathed. She was still talking in a whisper and she was rather short of breath.

"I told him a downright lie," I confessed. "*And* he'll soon know it," I added.

"He won't know *when* I left," Sarah

said. In spite of her seventy-odd years she can drive a car like a twenty-year-old.

"He had a—revolver on the carrier of his machine," I recalled. "And he licked his lips."

"If I were a man——" Sarah began. But she didn't finish. There were things to do.

Late that night I had a telephone call from Sarah. "Everything go off all right?" I asked.

"The vet put the dear boy to sleep," Sarah said. "I'm coming back tomorrow."

The telephone exchange in our village is in Mrs. Pouncett's parlour, and in twenty years' service as a civil servant that devoted woman has not missed a single local conversation. Mrs. Pouncett had a mind like a shorthand notebook.

"Bear up!" I said, picturing Mrs. Pouncett's fat face framed in the earphone clip. Sarah hung up.

It was queer in the next few days to see Miss Anthony about without poor Zero. People were too kindhearted to say anything, but sympathy was with her and everyone missed Zero. It was the third afternoon that I saw P.C. Slaughter leaning his bicycle against my garden wall once more.

"It was you who told me Miss Anthony had gone to London that day," he accused.

My heart was beating but I managed to look calm. "I believe it was," I replied.

"Ah!" He made it sound as if I had convicted myself of something pretty dreadful. "I understand the dog has been destroyed?"

"That's right."

Slaughter shot a suspicious look at me. "I'd like to see the vet's certificate."

"Does a vet have to give a certificate?" I asked. "Why don't you go and see Major Codrington? He's a Justice of the Peace, and that's where Zero went to be—be destroyed."

"Major Codrington wasn't sitting when the order was made." The constable fixed his pig's eye on a distant elm top. "I heard the sound of a motor car starting up in the lane at the back of your orchard here, the afternoon I called on you. Know anything about that?"

"Cars often pass down the lane," I told him.

"Not to stop and pick up dogs, they don't."

"That is probably true," I replied. It saved me from having to tell another little lie.

"If that dog is being concealed by a person or persons unknown, it is a serious offence."

SLAUGHTER followed the trail and made his inquiries, but Sarah had been there first — and, as it happened, Major Codrington hated the sight of Mr. Withers, who had made the order. He got no change out of the vet who, naturally enough, was an animal-lover.

"There's going to be trouble if anyone is concealing—anything," the policeman threatened. "Or making false statements."

"When asked by the court to make any statements," Mr. Honnocks, the vet, told him, "I'll begin to think of making them. You've been told the order has been carried out. If you want to prove different, produce the animal."

"I'm not a-going to be defied." Slaughter said.

It seemed that he had come to an official end in the pursuit of his duty, but Sarah Anthony did a silly thing. She couldn't live without Zero. She brought him home from Major Codrington's and we all thought she must be out of her mind, assuming that bygones would be bygones and nobody would want to kill an innocent animal, with the law satisfied, as you might say.

P.C. Slaughter stopped at my gate on his way up the hill. "Miss Anthony gone to London again, I suppose?" he said.

I was too frightened to answer. It is not every woman who has the courage and boldness of Sarah Anthony.

"This time we'll see!" he said, and smiled. When he reached the old farmhouse Sarah came to the door, and, as it happened, Mr. Honnocks, the vet, was with her.

"From information received," Slaughter began, "I have reason to believe you have a dog here on the premises."

Miss Anthony looked at him as if he was something slimy, and said nothing.

"May I harsk if the information is correct, Madam?"

I heard Sarah's voice low and level from where I stood in the lane. "It is correct," she said.

"*An'* may I harsk *where?*"

She pointed to the old cowhouse across the yard. In a silence you could hear creak, P.C. Slaughter walked over the yard and opened the door.

Zero bounced out and bit him three times before he could scramble over the fence.

"It's a rash thing to do, to poke your head inside farm buildings without being asked," Mr. Honnocks point out.

Slaughter rolled over and rose to his feet. His face was purple. "I'll have the law on all of you for this!" he cried.

"For what?" the vet demanded.

"Harbouring a dog ordered to be destroyed. Defying the court. Making false statements!"

ZERO was on his hind feet, a happy smile on his face, trying to lick Sarah's ear off. "No one ordered *this* dog to be destroyed," Mr. Honnocks said.

"*What!*" Slaughter roared. "I identify the animal!"

"And I, as a veterinary surgeon, identify him as an animal from the same litter belonging to Major Codrington, given to Miss Anthony by him to replace the one she had to have destroyed."

"I identify him, too," said Sarah sweetly. "So will every man, woman and child in the village."

"Why—you——!"

"Now, now!" admonished Mr. Honnocks.

"You're not going to get away with this!" Suddenly a nasty grin spread over his thick lips and his rage vanished. "Ah! But 'e's bit me, too. I'm afraid, Madam, I'll have to get another order."

My heart sank. I knew he would do it. Evidently Sarah had not thought of this. But I didn't know Sarah Anthony.

"I am sorry the animal bit you. It seems, though, that Alsatians do not like you, doesn't it? I'll have to submit to the court's order. I'll do it first time, too—now that I know how."

"You'd better!" Slaughter threatened. He bent to fasten the clips on his tattered trousers.

"We'll carry out the court's order," the vet promised. "Same as before. And I trust you will personally come up to assure yourself that the order has been carried out."

"An' why not?" Slaughter demanded in fine irony.

"Because," Mr. Honnocks said, tapping his foot on the cobbles and smiling at something, "because that litter of Major Codrington's from which this excellent animal came was a litter of nine. The major has plenty up his sleeve, if you get what I'm driving at. Warm for the time of year, is it not?"

"I swopped the lawn mower for him"

CITY OF MANY NATIONS

Continued from page 10

Dean's Bar before lunch to hear what's new. Dean is a coffee-coloured Anglo-Egyptian with an Oxford accent, who knows the details of every scandal in Tangier, and most of the worthwhile scandals in Europe.

On his walls are signed photographs of Suzy Solidor and Alice Delysia, and his conversation is larded with references to "Noel," "Diana" and the rest of the international set.

Over the pre-lunch Martini the customer may hear that the pretty little cabaret dancer, generally assumed to be a Russian spy, has fallen madly in love with the American gigolo who was brought here by the ageing Italian millionairess. The story runs around town with the speed of lightning. By evening, at Parade (the chic bar for an after-dinner drink), the story has been forgotten and there is another better one to take its place.

No Trade For Spies

As for the suggestion of spying, there is a lot of talk about Tangier as an international espionage centre but the basic weakness is that there is nothing to spy on. Since the war, the bottom has fallen out of the spy business, just as it has out of two other erstwhile staple industries: sex and smuggling.

The harbour is always full of little vessels which run contraband hither and thither around the Mediterranean, but in the waterfront cafés the sailors say gloomily that there is no longer any money in it.

As for sex, Tangier developed quite a thriving business catering for the pre-war tourist trade, but now there are practically no tourists.

The English used to come here in large numbers to shed their inhibitions, but the Bank of England is so terrified of sterling getting into the free exchange market that it is almost impossible for a British tourist to obtain a Tangier credit.

The only sure way to make money is to speculate in currency or real estate, and they are doing that as greedily and as crazily as only Tangerines know how. They sit around the patio of the luxurious and wildly expensive Minzah Hotel, discussing a deal in terms of millions—dollars, pesetas or francs.

If a contract is broken the aggrieved party can sue, but it is hardly worth the trouble. An American can only be brought before the American Consular Court; a Moroccan goes before the Sultan's Court; a Jew before the Rabbinical Tribunal; and anyone else before the Mixed Court.

If There's A Murder

The last-named is something special, even for Tangier. It has five judges, one each for Belgium, Great Britain, Spain, France and Italy. If you are summoned for parking, your case is heard by three judges and you have the right to appeal. If you are charged with murder, you go before one judge and there is no appeal.

The police, who are dressed in American military police uniforms economically bought from war-disposals, are a mixed group of Arabs, Jews, Spaniards, Italians, Portuguese and French, with Belgian officers. They keep the traffic moving and the Arab beggars away from the entrance to the Minzah. It is about as much as they are expected to do.

So life goes on. It is petty and provincial, it is coarse and it is crazy. It is international, but let us pray it is not what we hope to achieve by internationalism.

THE ACTOR WHO WON'T STAY DEAD

Years after his death, Rudolph Valentino still has his fans. The legend that has grown up is even more fantastic than the career of the man himself

by ***DEAN JENNINGS***

His name means "well-known wolf." But he was more like a panther

On each anniversary of his death, mysterious Ladies-in-Black sat at his tomb

AFTER WHAT WAS PROBABLY the most maudlin funeral in the history of public idols, a Hollywood crypt was sealed twenty-three years ago, on the body of Rudolph Guglielmi Valentino, a brooding, feline young man who had been earning a million dollars a year as the film symbol of primitive love.

Valentino's modest tomb in Hollywood Memorial Park is one of the town's permanent tourist attractions, drawing some 4,000 visitors a year.

The Valentino statue in nearby De-Longpré Park—the only public monument ever dedicated to an individual movie star—is gawked at daily by scores of visitors because, among other things, a lovelorn young woman ended her life at the feet of the bronze figure not many years ago.

Every weekend, squads of hardy but uninvited sightseers drive up or climb the hills to Falcon Lair, Valentino's mansion in Beverly Hills, and clutter up the grounds with banana peels and sandwich crusts.

Pester His Brother

Alberto Valentino, the late star's brother, now has an unlisted telephone, to avoid the grimly curious people who flooded him with mail for some twelve years after Rudy died, including one character who still wears Valentino-style costumes and insists he is a reincarnation of the sheik.

The morbid fascination for the actor who won't stay dead has even extended to a few strange women who have formally asked to be buried—when they die—in the same mausoleum with Rudy. Some of them, presumably, are among the thirty-five women who claimed, long after the actor was gone, to have given birth to Valentino babies.

There are also frequent showings of the ancient Valentino films. Recently, a Hollywood cinema owner listlessly announced that he would show a Valentino picture. Women patrons began lining up at the box office two hours early, and when the doors were finally opened there was a small riot in the lobby.

His Arabian Horse

At the University of California Agricultural College in Davis, Professor Carroll Howell is planning to mount the bleached bones of Jadaan, the giant Arabian horse which Valentino rode to screen glory. Valentino only hired Jadaan, but the horse was exhibited every weekend in Pomona for eleven years after the star's death.

During that period the Sunday attendance averaged 2,000 people, mostly women, and Jadaan, who was an actor at heart, earned about sixty thousand dollars prancing around a ring with a pointedly empty red-velvet Egyptian saddle. So many women wanted to ride Jadaan bareback in his stall that eventually guards were hired to keep them out of the stable.

There have been frequent attempts to locate Valentino in the spirit world. Valentino's arrival at one of the séances was heralded by his dead mother speaking in perfect English, though in life she had never learned the language. And the ghostly star himself had a frog in his throat, especially when he was asked if he ever haunted his house in Hollywood. He told his earthly audience he didn't like the word "haunt," but admitted he had been wandering around the old place at night.

Miss Natacha Rambova, Valentino's second wife, said she had pinned him down in a private séance. He told her he was happy—which was not what he said when they were divorced.

Learned The Tango

The Valentino legend, which is now indisputably a part of American folklore, did not reach full growth until after his death, but it had been in the making for years. The young Italian was eighteen years old when he arrived in New York, burdened with the incredible name of Rodolfo Alfonso Raffaelo Pietro-Filiberto Guglielmi di Valentia d' Antonguolla.

He called himself Rodolfo Guglielmi when he worked as a car washer and gardener, but changed it to the more mellifluous Rudolph Valentino after he had taught himself the tango and become a professional dancer.

The name Rudolph means "well-known wolf," but it is doubtful whether Valentino ever gave this meaning much thought. Actually he was more like a panther—with velvety black hair, smouldering dark eyes, and a catlike grace, of which a critic once said: "Valentino doesn't walk—he flows." The animal illusion was sharpened by flaring nostrils and a mysterious sulkiness.

Physically Super-fit

Most people think of Valentino as a short, fragile man, but actually he was 5 ft. 11½ in. tall, carefully kept his weight at 160 lb. and was usually in superb physical condition.

He danced in night clubs and hotels for months, and in time got to Hollywood only because a generous Al Jolson gave him a free Pullman berth on a special show train going down from San Francisco. After his arrival, it took the movie makers more than eight years to discover that the aloof young man with the melancholy eyes was wasting his talents as an extra. They gave him second leads. Even then he had indifferent success and seemed doomed to a lifetime of playing whiskered villains.

At that critical point, with Valentino brooding over money and his short-lived marriage with actress Jean Acker, a scenario writer named June Mathis had a hunch and picked him

for the rôle of Julio in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*.

Within three years the hypnotic young Latin was a fabulous figure on the American scene — a sensitive stranger catapulted into a big-money world for which he was not prepared.

Valentino became addicted to purple neckties and solid gold bracelets, and handmade cigarettes from London. He quarrelled with friends and enemies alike; fought with the studio and eloped with Natacha Rambova, the sultry stepdaughter of a New York perfume king. He was arrested for bigamy in a test case involving his Mexican divorce from Miss Acker and had to borrow money for the £2,000 bail.

Blocked from making movies because he insisted upon the right to select his stories, he and Natacha toured the country in a private railroad car, giving dancing exhibitions at £1,500 a week. He wrote a book of poems—a little volume now worth an outlandish sum to devoted fans—flounced off to Europe after remarrying Natacha, and picked up three Isotta-Fraschini cars worth £10,000.

After his Hollywood wounds were healed with new contracts that would pay him a million dollars a year, Valentino struck one picture goldmine after another. He made the seemingly imperishable *Sheik;* a dashing Cossack drama called *The Eagle*, which has also been revived recently; the durable *Son of the Sheik*, in which he played a dual rôle to prove he could act without a squirming damsel in his arms; and the gay French story, *Monsieur Beaucaire*.

Grew A Beard

During this period Valentino grew a beard and incurred the wrath of the Master Barbers of America. They protested that every moonstruck young man in the country would promptly imitate Valentino and would "make American citizens difficult to distinguish from Russians." Valentino removed the beard the next day.

The mesmerism inflicted by the great lover is remarkable considering that Valentino was henpecked throughout his second marriage and was often made fun of for his weaknesses. The Chicago *Tribune* once attacked him in an editorial entitled "Pink Powder Puffs," which said: "Why didn't someone quietly drown Rodolfo Guglielmi, alias Valentino, years ago?" Valentino challenged the writer to a duel, but the gauntlet lay unheeded. Insiders have since declared that this was probably a sound refusal because Valentino was not only a deadly fencer, but had held his own in friendly bouts with Dempsey and Gene Tunney.

Valentino himself was touchy about his magnetism for women and used to point out belligerently—but erroneously—that at least half his fan mail came from men.

"Much of this perfumed ballyhoo was my own fault," he went on sadly. "I wanted to make a lot of money, so I let them play me up as a lounge lizard, a soft, handsome devil whose only aim in life was to sit around and be admired by women. Sheik? Why, I'm just a farmer at heart."

There isn't much doubt that Valentino was generally misunderstood and that underneath the veneer of arrogance and spurious greatness he was a simple and lonely man. "Life is too fast for me," he confided one August morning in 1926. "A man should control his life. My life is controlling me."

Women still fight to see Valentino films like *The Eagle* (with Vilma Banky)

On the night of August 14 of that year, Valentino was in New York and went out with Marion Benda, a Follies beauty. At noon the next day he complained of a searing pain in his side. Five hours later he was in hospital for an emergency operation.

Complications suddenly aggravated his condition, and the world learned that the great lover, then only thirty-one years old, was dying.

Women Were Frantic

Crowds swarmed around the hospital. Harassed officials set up a public information desk, the police were summoned to keep weeping women from reaching Valentino's room, and telegrams were pouring in at the rate of 500 a day. On August 23 Valentino gasped: "Please raise the shades. I want to see the sunlight." He died the following day at ten minutes past noon.

The news precipitated the tidal wave of emotion which has not receded to this day. Thousands of fans stormed the hospital; more thousands were marched past Valentino's bier at the rate of 150 a minute.

A crowd estimated at 100,000 massed outside the Church of St. Malachy during the funeral services, and a first aid station took care of unfortunate mourners who fainted or were crushed in the mob. Valentino's body went by rail to Hollywood in a private carriage, and his brother, Alberto, still recalls seeing thousands of men and women kneeling in prayer wherever the train paused.

While the funeral train was rolling towards California, there arose a rumour, which is still alive, that Valentino was poisoned with a "knock-out drop." Alberto confesses that he has never been satisfied with the medical explanations — peritonitis, perforated ulcers and pleurisy—and says: "Some day I hope to learn the truth."

He discussed the murder theory with New York authorities at the time, but did not consent to an autopsy, and Valentino's bronze casket was never opened again after the interment on September 7, 1926.

Fan Clubs Got Busy

Valentino was laid in a crypt given to the family by his discoverer, June Mathis. But the strange resurrection began almost at once.

In London, Bombay, Tokyo, Paris, Budapest and other cities, Valentino fans launched memorial organizations, and the seventy established Valentino fan clubs in the United States were reorganized as permanent units. These clubs were so active after Valentino died that Alberto kept one secretary busy for ten years handling an estimated 200,000 letters.

The Valentino estate included a £1,000 Irish wolfhound, two aviaries complete with hundreds of birds, five horses, antique armour worth £15,000, several cases of initialled cigarettes, eight motor cars, forty suits, 1,000 pairs of socks, 300 silk shirts, 300 neckties, fifty pairs of shoes, a £1,500 launch, seven watches, three fur coats, two homes worth £50,000, and a new sports car, the body of which was hand-tooled to resemble snakeskin.

In Italy, citizens of Valentino's home town established a memorial fund for a newly born baby who was named after the actor, but the unfortunate youngster grew up into Mussolini's army and was killed in action during the second World War.

Alberto has had his troubles, too. He was involved in litigation over the Valentino estate and had his home broken into for Valentino relics.

But the longest series of troubles attributable to the so-called Valentino jinx is Producer Edward Small's attempt to make a film based on Valentino's life. Small began talking about the picture twelve years ago, and threw out calculated feelers about stars who might play the rôle. Many movie stalwarts snapped at the lure, but Small finally chose handsome Jack Dunn, Sonja Henie's skating partner —and ten days later Dunn died of a rare blood disease.

Since then Small has reported annually and plaintively about his dream project. His files are bursting with letters from 50,000 young Americans who want the job. But the insiders — including the surviving Valentinos—predict that the film will never be made.

Meanwhile the legend grows. This month Hollywood Memorial Park prepared for the annual stampede to the crypt, but it was not expected that there would be any Ladies in Black, the mysterious and heavily veiled women who used to make dramatic appearance, with flowers and prayer books, on the anniversary of Valentino's death.

Lady In Black Unveiled

The first Lady in Black was a hired stooge created by a Press agent. To the amazement of all concerned, there were two or three such sombrely garbed ladies the following year, and for a time there were so many, some witnesses say, that newspapermen had to number them in the order of their appearance to avoid confusion.

Just a few weeks ago, a genuine Lady in Black—the last of the clan—revealed that she was Marion Benda, the showgirl who was with Valentino the night before he was taken ill.

Today, Valentino's continuing affairs are administered by Alberto, a saturnine and stocky man who only vaguely resembles his immortal younger brother, and Alberto's son Jean, a sound technician at M-G-M. Rudy's sister, Signora Maria Strada, once lived in Hollywood but has long since returned to Italy, and with her daughter Gabrielle is remote from the maelstrom.

"That the public only revere Rudy's memory as an actor and as a man," says Alberto, "that is the family's only wish. All these other things — the people who pretend to remember Rudy and who make fools of themselves for money or publicity—are shoddy and cheap. I waited for years for one of these women in black to come to us—we would have known or helped anyone who was a friend of Rudy's But none of them ever did.

People come only when there is a new scheme for cashing in on Rudy's name. I wonder if it will ever end."

Twelve books in one

REMEMBER *The Jacaranda Tree*, by H. E. Bates? It was one of John Bull's outstanding serials and a Book Society Choice. An earlier novel by this famous author, *The Cruise of "The Breadwinner,"* is now available, with eleven other great novels, in one volume—*Twelve Modern Short Novels*.

Contents of the book include Aldous Huxley's *The Gioconda Smile* (the play version ran for nine months on the London stage), and best-sellers by Graham Greene, Ernest Hemingway, Oscar Wilde, Rudyard Kipling, and Thornton Wilder. Full details appear on page 31.

Night without stars

by WINSTON GRAHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY E. J. PETTS

Instinct told me Pierre Grognard was a man I was going to dislike. And instinct proved correct. Till then, my friendship with Alix had been gay and carefree. Now I knew that trouble lay ahead. Grognard was a dangerous customer to cross

Grognard said: "Keep your hands off my property, monsieur. Alix belongs to me." I said: "That's a rather big claim, isn't it?"

I SUPPOSE THIS STORY starts on the day the shell came cahwooshing down snugly beside me. But we'll skip the days, the weeks, the months that followed in the base hospital and kick off from the day Rachel, my fiancée, passed me the gentle hint that she had fallen for a lieutenant in navy blue.

It was a bit of a blow. She hadn't told me before while visiting me in hospital because she was a nice girl and didn't relish the idea of brushing off a gentleman while he was blind. But once the bandages were off and I could see, it became pretty obvious that the old magic wasn't there between us any more, and the truth had to out.

Well, that was that. I went back to partnering in the solicitor's office. I played a bit of golf until my eye got worse again. Then I went to see Halliday, the surgeon. He hummed and hawed a bit, did the routine tests, then told me he wasn't satisfied. The operation had left a scar that was now tightening and pulling the pupil out of shape. It might never grow worse; on the other hand it might.

I began to get really fed up with things. My sight *was* getting worse. I tried to disguise it from people and from myself, but it was no good. And then I remembered the Wintertons, friends in Beaulieu, near Monte Carlo. I wrote to them, and they invited me to stay for the winter.

I went, passed a few leisurely weeks sunning, gossiping, drinking cocktails. Outwardly, everything seemed fine. I was just a gent who was a little shortsighted. Inwardly, it wasn't so good. I knew I was going blind, and it was doing queer things to me psychologically. I had to get away and be by myself for a bit.

I did just that. After a while, I landed up in Nice. I walked a lot, thought a lot, and got steadily more depressed. One day, I went to buy a new pair of shoes. Trying them on, I walked a few paces, then couldn't find the way back to my seat. I stumbled over a stool and went flat.

The girl serving me thought I'd fainted, and there was a minor panic, but at last I got out, somewhat shaken, and had a quiet drink at a café opposite. The fall seemed to settle it. There seemed nothing for it now but to wait for the guide dog and the white stick or—or end it all.

At this point, the girl from the shoe shop turned up. It was her lunch hour and she came and ate with me. She was an intriguing girl called Alix Delaisse (married, as it turned out) and I found myself making a date with her for Saturday night. All right, I told myself, Saturday night: I'll stay alive till then.

PART II

Date With Alix

THAT was the way it began. I've often thought if I'd picked another shoe shop not any of the rest would have happened. Or part of it would have happened anyway, but I should have had no share in it.

By the Saturday I might have solved all the mysteries by opening a vein in my bath. Instead of that I was giving some thought

to the best way of spending the evening out.

Of course I knew I was most probably running into trouble. In a few days there would be an excited young Frenchman round at my apartment wanting to do the blood-letting trick for me. Or perhaps Delaisse would be a blasé intellectual who'd want to talk the whole thing out on the existentialist plane.

While I waited for her I thought this was the first time I'd taken a girl out for nearly three years. The last one had been Rachel on that London leave. (Rachel married now and with a son.) One or two of Claire Winterton's younger guests had made on-coming remarks, but I'd had a complex about the whole business. In this new mood it seemed objectless to have been so stuffy. Perhaps this was one way of getting back on life.

On the corner of the Place Masséna I stood and waited, listening to the rickety old trams thumping past. Under the portico an old woman was shouting in a monotonous metallic voice: "*Samedi Soir. Paris—Presse. Samedi Soir. Paris—Presse.*"

I heard Alix come up before she spoke; in fact, I knew she stood a few moments looking at me, but I didn't let on.

"Good evening, Monsieur Gordon."

"Madame Delaisse."

We shook hands formally in the French way and then we got a taxi and drove to a place I knew on the front.

"This is very expensive. Can't we go somewhere cheaper?"

"One of the drawbacks about going out with a man like me is that there's nothing much to do except talk and eat. This is a good place to do both."

"There are cheaper places to do both. Less smart. I—shall feel a little out of my depth."

"I don't think I quite believe that."

"What do you mean?"

"I can't put it more plainly because I don't know myself. I've an instinct that you won't really feel—out of your depth."

She didn't say any more until we were seated. When we came to order the wine I left it to her and after hesitation she chose a good vintage.

I said gently: "My guess is that you come of a good family and that the war has made all the difference. Right?"

She said: "What is a good family? My father was good. My grandfather was good. Is that what you mean?"

"All right. What are your views on the fall of the Government?"

"No. Talk about yourself. Where were you wounded? I want to know that. Was it in France?"

"D'you think it tactful to bring up the subject?"

"I think it would be too tactful if I avoided it."

I said in surprise: "Maybe you're right. . . . Though I don't want to go on about it."

All the same I found myself telling her about Normandy and the tank battles round Caen and how the shell had burst much nearer two other men who had only got scratched up a bit, while I. . . . I went on about the rest, and didn't realize till afterwards that it was practically the first time I'd told anyone the whole thing.

We put in most of the evening there. I sat near enough to make out the light in her eyes sometimes and the glimmer of her teeth. She'd a pleasant laugh, self-deprecating and a little husky. She was wearing a tight velvet bodice of some sort with a white brooch at her throat. I think she was more frank and open and more quickly companionable with me because I had this drawback of failing sight. I wasn't as other men: ordinary standards didn't apply.

She'd a queer way of looking at things. She wouldn't talk about her own experiences, but it was plain enough they had been bitter some way or another. Underneath her liveliness, her self-chiding humour, her youth, was a layer of bitterness, or resentment, or grief, I couldn't tell quite which. It was like wandering through flowery fields and stubbing your toe on a stone.

For the first time for months my own interest was drawn out and away. I wanted to know about her. The change in myself from a week ago was enormous.

We sat on through the coffee and the cognac and the cigarettes, getting more friendly all the time, till quite suddenly she stiffened in her chair and then went on talking one per cent faster than before. I took no notice until a man stopped at our table and she looked up as if seeing him for the first time.

"Good evening, Alix."

"Oh, good evening, Pierre."

"Strange, our meeting like this."

"Yes, isn't it. M. Gordon, may I introduce M. Pierre Grognard."

We shook hands. He was a biggish man, plump and fairly young. His hands were manicured and had never done hard work. His grip was just a contact, as if he'd passed you something over a counter.

"I hope you didn't feel tired after last night," he said to her.

"No, of course not. It was fun."

"If we'd come away when you said, I should have been fifty thousand francs richer."

"Oh, well . . . that's the way of things."

"Next time I'll respect your judgment, Alix."

"It wasn't really judgment. I always like to seize my winnings when they're there."

"Good principle. I shall take it to heart. You are visiting Nice, monsieur?"

"Yes. I've been here since February."

"I hope you find it agreeable."

"Very pleasant, thanks."

"In the summer, of course, it gets too hot."

"I like the heat."

"Do you? I always try to get up into the mountains. One can breathe there. Well, I must go. *Au 'voir*, Alix. Tuesday?"

She hesitated a second. "Yes, Tuesday."

"Good. *Au 'voir*, monsieur."

"*Au 'voir.*"

As I sat down I thought it wasn't only a husband who might resent my being about.

She fidgeted a minute rather uncomfortably, digging in her handbag for something and generally trying to be busy. I waited. At length she said: "I think soon we should go."

"Why?" I said gently. "D'you feel in need of an early night?"

"That," she said, "is presuming a little, Monsieur Gordon."

". . . Would it also be presuming a little to suggest that you call me Giles?"

Knowing the Continental preference for formality, I thought she might jib at this, but after a minute she said: "Very well—if you wish it."

There was a long silence. Then I said: "You must agree it's a bit unusual to meet someone who works in a shoe shop during the day and at night goes to the Casino and wins—and loses—fifty thousand francs. It——"

"Oh, no, don't make that mistake. It was Pierre who gambled. It is his money. I stood and watched."

"And advised him?"

"And advised him."

"And you are going to do the same next Tuesday?"

"Oh, if he wants to go I shall go with him, I suppose."

"Who is he? May I ask that?" I felt her quick irritation as she answered: "I don't think I want to discuss him, please."

"Fair enough." I thought the thing out. "All right," I said. "I'll tell you. Pierre Grognard's about thirty-three or four. He's come up in the world. Began life as a schoolteacher or—no—more likely a lawyer's clerk, somewhere in the north. Don't think he's in law at present, but knows enough about it to get round it when he wants. He's in commerce some way, probably owns a big shop or hotel. Thoroughly respectable now. Knows how to do things at the right time with the right people. Fond of women, and conceited about his successes. Smokes Havana cigars and very fond of garlic and probably shell fish. Still a bit nervy and unsure about something in spite of all his prosperity."

She didn't speak for a while. The waiter came, and I got the bill and paid it.

When he'd gone she said in a queer voice: "I'm troubled."

"Why?"

"Tell me why you're interested in Pierre?"

"I'm not interested in him."

"Has someone been talking to you?"

"I've never heard of him till tonight."

She sat back in her chair. "How do you know all that?"

"When you can't see you rely on what you hear, what you touch, what you smell. They all grow twice as keen. And other things. I don't know. One gets into a bit of an old maid, all sensitized plate and impressions. Positively no witchcraft."

"You swear you have never heard of Pierre before?"

"Certainly, if it helps you."

"I am still disquieted."

"Why?"

"I wonder how much you know about me."

I laughed. "I've told you."

"All?"

"Well, nearly all. I had a feeling just now that you really don't like Grognard as much as you try to."

"That's quite wrong," she said with a first glint of anger. "He's a friend of mine."

"Well, that's fair enough, too." I wondered if it was just her loyalty that was ruffled. "I was thinking—are you doing anything on Monday evening?"

"I am busy on Monday evening."

"Wednesday, then. Come and gamble with me on Wednesday."

"No, I don't like to gamble really. It's very dull."

I sat down at the piano in a mild

I escorted her home in a taxi. When we got into the old town she stopped the cab and said she would get down here.

I said: "Anyway it was a nice gesture coming out this once. Thanks for the sympathy."

"I didn't come with you out of sympathy," she said with that glint again. "I came because I wanted to come."

"Well, that's pleasant to know."

"If you can read people so well you should have known that."

"There's always the danger of reading into people what you want to read."

"Nasty things as well as nice?"

"Nice things as well as nasty."

"That's very modest."

"It's better than being pig-headed."

I used the word "*entêté*" and didn't realize until after I'd spoken that it could mean infatuated as well.

After a minute she said: "Perhaps I'll come again some time."

"On Wednesday?"

". . . Very well, then. If you will ask me."

"What do I say? 'Please, Alix'?"

"Thank you—Giles."

"And you'll come because you want to come?"

"I'll come because I want to come."

On Wednesday I met her in the same place. She was ten minutes late and out of breath, and explained she'd been kept at the shop, and had only had a few minutes to rush home and change. First, before we were quite free, she had a little note to deliver. It was a few minutes' walk, along the boulevard Carabacel and then up the rue St. Laurent du Var. We stopped at what appeared to be a shop, but she led the way in at a side door and up a flight of stairs.

She said: "I will just knock in case the servant is in, but I know Pierre is in Monte Carlo."

We waited. If I'd known where we were coming I should have stayed downstairs.

She said: "I'll push it under the door, then."

As we went down I said: "So that's where Pierre lives?"

"Yes, it is a nice flat. It goes right over Mallard's bookshop. The shop isn't his, but he finds it a convenient place to live."

"A bachelor *ménage*, I suppose?"

"Yes. He has been married but is divorced. That is almost the only thing you didn't guess with your witchcraft."

I wanted to ask more but decided not.

Tonight we did most of the opposite sort of things: dined in a cheap restaurant in the old town; then, since the night was cool but still, walked round the harbour and out towards Mont Boron. She guided me with a touch or two on my elbow. Some people steer a blind man as if he

e and couldn't think what to play. After a while I remembered some Provençal songs and felt better about it all. I noticed they'd all stopped talking

were a farm tractor. She chatted most of the time in her low, level voice with its humorous overtones.

"Someone once told me," she said, "that Englishmen don't really *like* women. Is that true, d'you think?"

"Was it an Englishman who told you that?"

"No."

"Ah."

"But he was a Frenchman who had lived long in England. He said Englishmen only really put up with women because it served their purpose to. What they were *really* interested in was golf and gardening and dogs and *men's* company. And of course sometimes their work—but that more often in the upper classes than the lower."

I said: "And what do you think about that?"

"Oh, I . . . I have had no experience of them until I met you—and you are one by yourself."

"Every man is one by himself. The more I see of 'types' the more I think they exist only to mislead."

"Yes, but some people fit in more than others. You must admit that. You, for instance. I would never have guessed you were a lawyer."

"What then?"

"Oh, that's more difficult. But not a lawyer. It is something in your manner, and something inward. I should have thought you lived by your brain, but more creative perhaps, more imaginative."

"Very gracious of you. I expect we all have two sides: the 'be' and the 'would be.'"

"Yes," she said, and seemed to mean a lot by it.

We stopped under a lamp and leaned over the wall. The frogs were croaking in the quiet night.

"Tell me what you see."

"Oh—it's very dark. The moon won't rise for another hour. Down there, that way, is Nice: two hundred—three hundred thousand people, lights twinkling, casinos, big hotels, poor streets, poverty, slums, pleasure steamers, fishing boats, dredgers and coal barges. Beyond that, though you can't see it, are mountains. This way, straight ahead, it is nothing, all black. That way, to your left, the coast goes in towards Villefranche, then out again at Cap Ferrat. Beyond that is the Tête de Chien and Monaco. I often go to Villefranche. I've relatives there."

"Good opening," I said, "but even the guide books can do better than 'Villefranche. I have relatives there.'"

"I am not a guide book. I couldn't write one. To write a guide book you must have a flat mind. Mine is hilly."

"I believe you. Somebody said once: 'The vigorous mind has mountains to climb and valleys to repose in.'"

"Did they?" She was pleased. "Someone thinks like me. Who was it?"

"Hazlitt, I believe. Or Emerson."

"Shouldn't there be a difference?"

"There is. But not in my memory."

"And," she said, "did he add: 'The vigorous memory has mountains to look back on and valleys to dread, and—and beacons to keep alight!'"

"No. He didn't say that. Do you believe that?"

ALIX didn't answer, and after a minute I said: "Don't you think there might be a risk in keeping too many beacons alight?"

"How do you mean?"

"Well, I've met confirmed firefeeders in the past and they usually get warped as time goes on."

She said: "Some day I will tell you."

"Good. The sooner the better. I'm in a fog at present."

"A fog?"

"Well, I've only the slightest idea what you look like—that one glimpse at Biffi's. And I've hardly begun to know you yet."

"Isn't it a little ambitious—so soon?"

"Perhaps we can go into that some time. . . . Just at the moment I get a sense of being let in to the ground floor and welcome. But there's a basement marked 'Staff only'. . . ."

"So?"

"Well, I don't know anything about that, but I get glimpses of things. Something seems to be sprouting down there, and I'm sure it's not honeysuckle."

She laughed. Somewhere not far away music had begun. It was only radio from a house but it sounded romantic in the night.

She said: "I'll quote back to you. Don't we say: 'Physician, heal thyself'?"

"Someone did."

"Well, then, forgive me, but aren't we perhaps in the same boat? Yes, I'm resentful for things that have happened to me. Some time I'll tell you. I'm young; I like life; I like food and wine and music and sunshine; I'm greedy for it all. But when I remember what I do remember, then some of that feeling shrivels up."

She shook back her hair. "Isn't that how you feel? Didn't you tell me—and wasn't it plain without your telling me—that you felt you couldn't go on that day we met? Now you're better, but aren't you still resentful about what's happened to you? You think, 'Life's played me a dirty trick. All right, from now on I'll go my own way, play my own game. The Devil take it!' Don't you?"

"Sound diagnosis. Now the cure?"

"Ah, I don't know it."

The radio was playing a rumba. The thumping beat of the thing and the tinkle of the castanets came through the giant palm trees behind us.

"Yes," I said, "but you know the

cause of my resentment. Basement is open for inspection."

"Well, I will tell you about mine, but not now, please. I don't want to think of it now."

"I'm sorry."

"As to the other fog," she said. "Is there nothing to be done?"

"Apparently not."

"You've had, of course . . . lots of advice."

"Lots of advice."

"It's very hard."

"Let's talk about the weather."

"Anyway," she said, "sometime, if it would help to see the person you're going out with . . . you have a little sight at close range?"

"Yes."

"Well, then. . . ."

"You're very obliging."

"Not at all."

I said: "There's no time like the present. This lamp. . . ."

"Oh, it would be better in the daylight."

"It's not the sort of thing that should be done in a public street."

She laughed a little. "Nor perhaps here."

All the same she didn't move when I bent to look at her.

Her eyes narrowed a bit in the light of the lamp, her lips turned in a faint smile that wasn't absolutely free from shyness.

I said pleasantly: "And in the nighttime I shall not forget."

"What do you say?"

". . . You might be English."

"Is that meant to be nice or not? I don't know."

"It's a remark made in scrupulous detachment."

"I don't think I want to be summed up."

"Privilege of my profession."

"Only surely for the judge."

"Don't move, please."

She turned a little away and then, defensively, back again. It was all rather lighthearted.

"Oh. Well. . . . Haven't you seen enough?"

"It's not a view I should tire of easily."

"I have got very accustomed to it."

"But you'd agree that it has its points."

"Oh, yes. . . . It has its points."

I touched her forehead, brought my fingers down her cheek to her chin.

I kissed her. After a bit the music stopped.

She drew back against the wall. "Well, Giles. . . . That is very disgraceful."

"Did you say disgraceful or distasteful?"

"Do you want me to pretend?"

"Then why disgraceful either?"

She lifted her shoulders. "I don't know if I am old-fashioned or new-fashioned. Perhaps I'm just Alix-fashioned. One has one's fidelity. . . ."

The music had started again. But this time it was a nasal tenor singing in Italian. The life had gone out of her. It was as if she had shivered. I didn't feel very flattered.

"You mean to your husband? I can't advise you on that."

"No—no one can. I'm—not very happy about this. I can't explain now. I think we should go home—forget it has happened."

"As you wish."

She took my hand. "Come, we'll stroll back; perhaps stop at a café on the way."

I turned to go with her.

I SAW her about twice a week during the next month. Of course there was no future in it; but I wasn't going to be put off by that. Each time we met, there seemed to be something new to do or to talk about. Even my eyesight didn't depress me the way it had.

She never mentioned her husband, and neither did I. Sometimes, by her movements and arrangements he seemed to be in the background; other times one hardly believed in his existence. When she spoke about the past it was usually about her childhood.

Her father had been a country doctor near Dijon. She had gone to a convent in Paris until she was sixteen, and then on the fall of France had come to live with an aunt in Nice. Father and aunt were both dead.

I knew she went on seeing Pierre Grognard about as often as she came out with me—and though I didn't much like it there was nothing I could do about it. Her life was her own, and I certainly had no claims I could decently put up.

By this time I was running short of money. It was awkward, because now more than at any other time I was anxious not to go to England; in fact, I was determined to stay. I'd written Cousin Lewis on it, asking if he could see any way round the difficulty, but he hadn't been helpful. There was always the fathomless hospitality of the Wintertons to fall back on, but it was a hospitality not without some obligations. I couldn't go to them and then rush off to Nice twice a week on secret business of my own. So when I went to see them I was careful to keep right off the subject.

ONE morning I had a visitor. I was just writing to Lewis again with the suggestion that he might try to do something for me on health grounds, and had got the magnifying glass over the paper to see whether the writing was straight or whether it climbed all over the sheet, when old Larosse, the concierge, tapped at the door and said a M. Grognard had called. . . .

I was standing against the mantelpiece when he came in. We said good day in the usual way, but I noticed he didn't attempt to shake hands. When I offered him a chair he said no, he'd rather stand. So—ho, I thought.

After a bit he came back from the window and said: "You have a pleasant flat here, monsieur."

"Pleasant enough."

"Nice is empty now. The summer season has not yet begun."

"I hope it will be a good one."

"On the contrary. The world is still very much upset. We have all suffered much from the war."

"Of course," I said sympathetically. "Comrades in arms, and all that."

I could tell he was eyeing me.

He said: "You're blind, aren't you, M. Gordon? You disguise it very well."

"I get along."

"Yes," he said. "Alix told me. Women are sympathetic creatures."

"I know. The surest way to their hearts is through a hard-luck story."

"Ah? You've found it so? A psychologist once told me that a woman is never happy unless she has something or someone to mother."

"There's a profound truth hidden somewhere in that."

He was ill at ease; I could hear him rubbing the shaved skin of his cheek.

"Of course," he said, "in a woman there are the two interests. There is the pity for a lame dog. And there is the love for a whole man. Unfortunately some might confuse the two. That could lead to trouble all round."

"Only trouble surely," I said, "for the lame dog?"

He thought that one out. "Yes. Trouble for the lame dog if you prefer it."

"But supposing the lame dog has nothing to lose and is willing to risk it?"

"Everyone has something to lose, monsieur. Even if it is only his self-respect."

It was a good reply. I offered him a cigarette, which he refused, and then lit one myself.

I said: "The parable's so thin that the bones stick through. Can't we do without it?"

He flapped the table with something—his gloves, I think.

"Yes, we can. Alix belongs to me, Monsieur Gordon. I have come to tell you to keep your hands off my property."

"That's rather a big claim, isn't it? What's your title: absolute, qualified or possessory?"

"It will soon be absolute, since you choose those terms."

"Does Alix know?"

"Naturally."

"I congratulate you."

"Thank you."

He waited and scraped his chin again. "And now. . . ."

"Now?"

"I should like your promise to keep out of my affairs."

"I don't understand. What have you to fear from a —— lame dog?"

"Nothing. But I find your interference offensive."

"I could say the same about your visit this morning."

"I am sorry to be discourteous. But you have brought it on yourself."

I drew at the cigarette but didn't get much fun out of it. Half the enjoyment goes when you can't see the smoke.

"Of course, Alix knows you've come to see me?"

He hesitated. "Of course."

"She approves?"

"Well . . . naturally she is still sorry for you."

"Well," I said, "you've made the situation quite clear, as you see it. Probably that's just as well. It saves misunderstanding."

"I should like some assurance from you, monsieur."

"I think you're a very lucky man."

"That may be. But it doesn't alter the fact that——"

"It doesn't alter the fact that that's all the assurance you'll get. I think you're a very lucky man. Now good morning."

HE didn't like leaving on that, but I wasn't having any further truck with him. After he'd gone I lit another cigarette and shoved the unfinished letter in a drawer. I didn't feel like doing any more at it just then.

A couple of days later I had the long-promised meal with John Chapel. As it happened his wife was indoors with a sore throat, so we ate by ourselves.

It seemed to me that John, with his special consular knowledge, might be the right person to advise on the currency business—also he might know something of Grognard. John was the sort of man who never lived in a town a week without knowing the right place to eat, the safest place to have your shirts laundered, the man to go to if you wanted seats for something that was all booked up, where to find the finest local wines and, probably, the best dressed cabaret show.

Marriage, I thought, had toned him down. Or perhaps it was just that I hadn't met him since he was twenty-one.

After we'd talked over, rather unfruitfully, the flight from the pound I said: "There was another thing I wanted to see you about, Johnny. D'you by any chance know a man called Pierre Grognard?"

"Grognard?" he said. "It's not a common name. Is that the fellow who's in the catering business?"

"It could be. . . ."

"The bloke I'm thinking of has three restaurants: one here, one in Monte Carlo, and one somewhere else."

"What sort of age?"

"Oh, about thirty-five; very good-looking if you like the type. A bit on the plump side, or soon will be."

"That's the man. What do you know

Continued on page 28

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Study Their Form

ANYONE who plays games knows that the quickest way to improve is to take on opponents who are better players. Almost unconsciously, faults are corrected and each game becomes a painless lesson.

We could do the same with the greatest game of all if we were not so mean-minded.

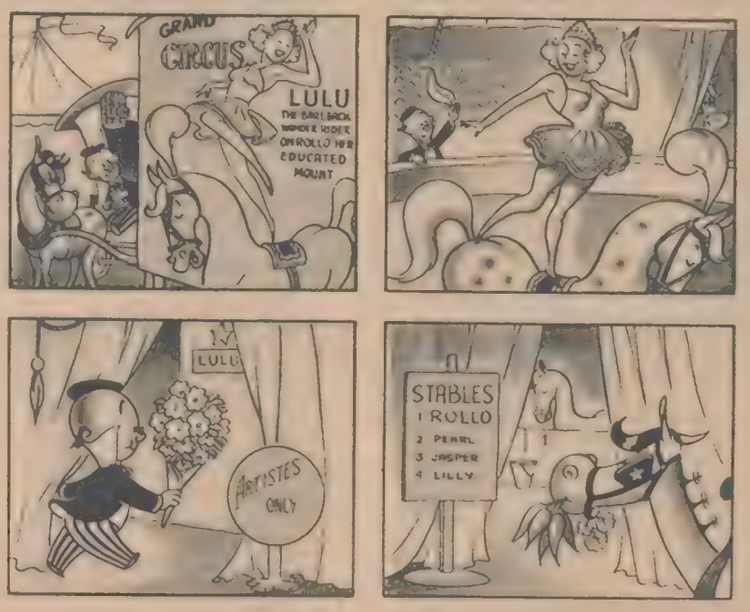
Unfortunately, many people regard the success of others as a personal offence. They cannot forgive anyone who does something better than they can do it.

If we would only note with generous appreciation how the "experts" behave, we could easily improve our way of handling life.

We should learn to look around and see what man can be at his best.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

MR. DIMPLE *by David Hand*



Soccer kicks off with an experiment

Three Third Division clubs have decided that the best place for a manager is on the field not the sideline

by STANLEY RUSSELL

Crystal Palace's player-manager, Ronnie Rooke (left). He's returned to his old team with new ideas

PICKING THE WINNERS at the start of a football season is a job not for the prophet but for the crystal gazer. Hopes are high in every one of the eighty-eight clubs (120 if you include the Scots). Each reports a happy family, determination, and good prospects of success.

Every guess is as good as the next man's. There is no formula to guarantee success. Football would lose its appeal if there were.

But there *is* a new trend which may narrow the gap between First and Third Division standards. Hull City discovered the secret last year when it appointed Horatio Carter as its player-manager.

His job was to pass on his knowledge of the game, and to inspire the team by his own brilliance during matches. Since he was also the manager, there was no risk of his ideas clashing with higher authority.

The experiment worked so well that Hull City not only won promotion but was among the last eight in the Cup.

Now three more young men, all personal friends and, like Carter, Internationals with First Division clubs, have been transported to the Third Division as player-managers to try to emulate the feats of Carter and Hull.

In the Third North are Peter Doherty (from Huddersfield Town to Doncaster Rovers) and Freddie Steele (from Stoke City to Mansfield Town); in the Third South, Ronnie Rooke has gone from Arsenal to Crystal Palace, where he began his League career as a young player.

Rooke has perhaps the hardest task of the three, for Palace finished at the bottom of the League last season and had to beg for re-election. But at least he knows that his work with the new broom will be well supported.

His first step was to sweep away the old atmosphere. For years the Palace grandstand and railings have been painted a drab reddish-brown. "It's like a morgue here," he said. "Let's have some fresh paint." So now a pleasing and cheerful cream and green colour scheme gives a brighter welcome to players and supporters.

No Questions Asked

Even more revolutionary was his decree that if any player wants a day or two off from training he can have it and no questions asked.

"All players have spells when training is a bore," says Rooke. "They don't benefit by being forced into it, so they might as well have a break and come back fresh and eager. I'm trusting my lads not to hop the wag. I don't think they'll let me down."

Though footballers keep office hours during the week—10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.—they have much in common with the old convicts working the treadmill. For years it has been the custom with most clubs to divide the day into morning and afternoon sessions of "lapping" (circling the perimeter of the field) and muscle-building exercises, with occasional heading and shooting practice.

Frequently players circle the field fifty or sixty times a day. The idea is to harden the muscles, but invariably the fitness of the body is matched by a deadening of the mind.

Rooke has an idea to beat that. Lapping is largely abolished, and in its place hiking has become a popular pastime. "I know several good walks around here of eight to ten miles," he says. "They're all different, and we take a fresh route each day."

And the old knees - bend - arms - stretch-touch-your-toes methods have been replaced by ball games in which teams "race" by passing the ball from man to man. The same muscles are exercised, but the competitive element deadens the monotony.

Better training methods are only half the battle in putting a successful team in the field. The manager must be something of a psychologist as well as a soccer expert. He must possess a flair for showmanship and publicity.

Footballers, though not as temperamental as film stars, love to see their names in print and to know they are being talked about. "I like to read about myself," says Rooke, "and it gave me a kick to realize that people were reading and talking about me."

Even mild criticism is better than being completely ignored. The Palace's new manager has been disappointed to find only half a dozen cuttings, apart from those in the local papers, about his team's exploits last season, and he thinks this had something to do with its poor showing. "You've got to get a footballer interested in himself," is his motto.

"The worst time of the season is the waiting period between the start of training and the first match," declares Rooke. "All the time I'm worrying and wondering whether my schemes will turn out all right. When the game begins, it's easy. If I want to change team formation or try out new tactics, I'm on the spot."

Football Bogey

Rooke's views about training are shared by Freddie Steele.

"Many older managers," says Steele, "persist in the belief that a player will get stale if he sees too much of a football. That's nonsense. We're not dogs chasing a rabbit. We're far more likely to get stale without it."

Steele is basing his campaign on the technique that made Horatio Carter's Hull City side so successful: speedy progress down the field, slick interchanging and quick-timed passing to baffle opposing defenders.

To ensure that his ideas are put over as he wants them, Steele will be training with his team. "I've known many youngsters listen to a manager telling them what he wants them to do. Their reaction is: 'That's all very well—but can he do it?'"

"I'm going to show them that he can. Discussing tactics with them and working out various schemes on the field is much better than acting the schoolmaster, drawing lines on a blackboard and saying: 'Now go out and do it.'"

Sure He Could Do It

In the few weeks he has been at Mansfield, Steele has received a flood of letters from hopefuls. One, particularly, he remembers:

"I wear glasses," began the writer, "but I have a good shot in either foot and can kick hard and accurately. I've never played in a proper match, only in kick-abouts on waste ground, *but I'm sure I should do well if given the chance.*"

Most footballers nearing the end of their career and thinking of wintering in a manager's chair will echo that last sentiment. But managerial jobs with League clubs are far fewer than the number of retiring footballers.

Carter, Steele, Doherty and Rooke have been lucky in getting such an opportunity. Carter has already made the most of his chance; now it's up to the others. The pity is that, because the League rules permit the promotion of only one club from each section of the Third Division, either Doherty or Steele is certain to have to wait for another year.

So may Rooke. You can't pick the winners in advance.

Madam Chairman makes them talk

by JOHN MAY

Whether they're statesmen or just bazaar openers, she sees they get up, speak up and shut up in the right way. The secret: forget voice, marshal ideas

A MINIATURE AUDIENCE of up to a score of men and women, in three or four rows of chairs, sits facing a white-haired, pink-cheeked woman at a small table. She calls upon each of them to make a five-minute speech.

"Ladies and gentlemen! Our first speaker today is Mr. Br vn. He is going to speak to us on the subject of 'London Town.' Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Brown."

Mrs. Alice Mears sits down. Beside her, Mr. Brown stands up to a small but heartening flutter of clapping. "Madam chairman," he says nervously, "ladies and gentlemen. . . ."

At the first class he jingled a bunch of keys in his pocket, talked with his head over his shoulder looking out of the window, and finally mumbled, "I'm afraid I've forgotten how I was going to end."

Now, as he finishes, the tiny audience claps him again. Before he has fully realized that this time he has come through without breaking down, Mrs. Mears hands him a written analysis of what he said. The next learner-speaker is launched while he is still reading it—and recovering.

Started In The Dark

The first seed of this school for speakers was planted in comforting obscurity. Mrs. Mears was a very young welfare officer in a factory where the girls had to sit in the dark for three-quarters of an hour daily.

"You'd better give them a lecture on something," said the managing director.

At that time this girl from Galway had never made a speech in her life. She fell back on material from a book about Irish folklore. Although the audience was hidden in darkness, her voice trembled with nerves as she spoke.

Then she struck a match to look at her watch. Still half an hour to go: she thought desperately.

Finally, she asked each girl to stand up and say something. It was the beginning of a flourishing discussion movement in the factory. But faced for the first time with an audience they could *see*, both the Galway girl and her best speakers "dried up."

Later, raising a family, Mrs. Mears retained her interest in public speaking. One evening she was talking with her son and members of his bomber crew.

They were planning the postwar world, and complaining of their inability to express their thoughts publicly. "Why not start a school?" suggested the wireless operator.

Though that particular bomber crew never came back, Mrs. Mears started her school for speakers in 1944. She took offices in Victoria Street, London.

Working voluntarily in the case of ex-Servicemen, especially from the R.A.F., the school caught on. Men from St. Dunstan's, particularly, found it a help to them.

The principal decided that she needed a few letters after her name, the normal qualification for a teacher. But she discovered that public speaking was hardly recognized as a creative art.

She wanted to qualify in the speech-making techniques used by such men as, say, Aneurin Bevan. She was offered instead theatrical elocution and voice production.

Finally she tackled the gold medal examinations of two London academies. Some of it seemed wildly off the point so far as public speaking was concerned, but she passed with high marks.

When it comes to giving instruction Mrs. Mears cuts away from this voice training approach. She tells pupils: "*Forget* your voice. Use it as the automatic servant it was intended to be. It will then be natural and express your personality."

Mrs. Alice Mears and pupil: card notes don't quiver in shaky hands

Atmosphere Is Nervy

The atmosphere at the beginning of a course is vibrant with nerves. "But you'll never be a public speaker unless you're nervous. It's your artistic temperament."

Meantime notes should be made on cards; they don't quiver as paper does in a shaking hand.

The hardest part of teaching is persuading pupils to think. As a start they have to give points supporting (or opposing) a simple motion, such as "That tobacco should be rationed," or "That gangster films encourage crime." Any learner-speaker who breaks down has to resume and finish his piece.

The ritual of introduction, applause, and addressing "the chair" is never relaxed. The pupil puts some kind of beginning in front of his motion, tacks on a summing-up and conclusion, and finds he has made a speech. But it is ideas and not phrases that have to be memorized.

"Madam Chairman" keeps things moving at a cheerful pace. Many speeches are dull, some entertaining.

The skipper of a coastal steamer tries proposing a toast. A night watchman "tours" Empire countries. A schoolmistress tells about schoolgirl bravery in a bomb incident.

As the supply of nervous victims clutching undelivered speechlets runs low, the atmosphere in the class lightens perceptibly.

When the basic of "get up, speak up, shut up" is mastered, the pupil has to learn the finer points. "Breathlessness increases nerves," for instance.

To demonstrate how to practise breathing, Mrs. Mears counts aloud up to fifty or more without taking a breath. "Test yourself by running uphill and then trying to make a speech!"

A speaker's nose should never dip too noticeably into notes. Winston Churchill (from a certain angle she bears a resemblance to him, and she refers to him in almost every lesson) uses special speech-making glasses with powerful lenses.

"He can read his notes at nearly half a mile with one eye shut!"

Another parliamentarian puts a colourless "nerve steadier" in his platform drinking water: gin.

In the full flood of oratory a speaker's mind is seldom conscious of what his body is doing.

One man, given to thrusting his hands deep into his trousers pockets, was told to use gesture. Recalling this tip when speaking, he suddenly flung out a left and clouted the chairman.

Things That Show Up

Men speakers sometimes need to be reminded that on a dais dirty shoes hit listeners right in the eye. A few earnest women speakers have to be told about unbecoming hats, or creased stockings. Sniggers from the front row remind them that it is unwise on a high platform to cross the legs when seated.

Besides evening classes the school runs weekend resident courses and sends teachers to women's institutes, young farmers' clubs, branches of the Red Cross, and so on. Last year it signed on more than a thousand pupils.

Why do people want to learn public speaking? Some wish to prepare for weddings, firms' lunches, odd meetings. A few are would-be candidates for councils or Parliament.

But it is pretty evident that many pupils feel that public speaking is just something they ought to be able to do to develop their personality.

One timid man sat through a complete course without a word. Then he started again and spoke. He claimed that his increased confidence eventually won him promotion at work.

The toughest to handle are private pupils whose names have to be kept confidential. Mrs. Mears has coached a prominent judge, a Cabinet Minister, M.P.s from all parties and a number of authors. "Writers tend to '*er*' too much over the choice of the precise word."

On His Toes

One M.P. became almost a sporting event. When speaking he rose up and down on his toes so frequently that somebody started to bet on how many times he would do it.

Mrs. Mears had to break him of it. Next time he started the upward stretch he suddenly remembered and came down with a final parade-ground heel-bang that shook the platform.

"But anybody with a good, natural voice and an average brain can train himself to speak," says Mrs. Mears. "The fallacy that speakers are born, not made, arises from people trying to use elocution as artificial respiration for lifeless, second-hand ideas."

6,000 DIPS INTO DANGER

by RICHARD COLLIER

Salvaging wrecks from the bottom of the Thames is a risky game of blind-man's-buff. Veteran diver, Ted Bland, knows. He was once very nearly mangled by a ship's propeller

Ted Bland has been diving for thirty years. He won the B.E.M. in the war

THE GREEN FLAG with the white lettering that spells out "WRECK" flaps idly in the cool air, twenty feet above the muddy swell of the Thames. The few craft that are passing keep well out in midstream, but there is nothing on the surface of the water to reveal that late last night a coal barge sprang a leak and sank five fathoms down with all her cargo.

Nothing but the green flag that flies above, and the little knot of onlookers that has already collected on the quayside, awaiting the coming of the wreck-lighter.

Presently, out in midstream, another green flag comes into view, this time flying from the masthead of the Port of London's Wreck-Lighter No. 2 which comes alongside and makes fast her moorings.

Soon veteran Thames diver Ted Bland is sitting on the edge of the coamings, pulling on his diving boots and preparing to "take the dip" for what is probably the six-thousandth time.

Ted Bland is short and stocky, as solid as a ship's capstan, but after thirty-six years on wreck-lighters, with thirty of them as a full-scale diver, he claims that his hands have become as hypersensitive as a surgeon's. Says Ted: "They have to be, because once you 'take the dip' you're working in the dark all the time, by touch alone. Thames water's so muddy, you can't even see your hand in front of your helmet."

A Clannish Lot

The first time that Ted ever took the dip was just after the first World War, when he had already served six years' apprenticeship as one of a lighter's crew. His father had been a diver for forty-seven years before that, and his elder brother was in it, too.

Ted says that divers, in those days, were "a clannish lot—they wouldn't even tell you the time if they could help it, leave alone how they did their job," so in ordinary circumstances it might have been years before he ever got the chance to learn. But one day the job of shackling a seven-inch hawser to a ground chain cropped up, and the diver was crippled with lumbago. The foreman ordered Ted to take over.

The diver stood in as linesman, feeding out the air-pipe and muttering vindictively as Ted went gingerly over the side.

But no sooner had Ted got below and started work than he felt himself starting to get heavier. Soon he realized that his boots were full of water, and that the water was rising rapidly to his waist.

"I thought the other diver hadn't screwed my helmet on tightly enough," explains Ted. "I thought he was trying to do for me, for pinching his job. But when I'd given a good old jerk on the line and they'd pulled me up we discovered what had happened. I'd got caught up with one of the wires in the hawser and it had torn a great hole in the cuff of my diving suit."

Try, Try Again

The next day the diver retired to his bed and refused to leave it, so Ted had to go down again. This time he managed the job to his satisfaction. "I came up and I told the foreman, 'I've got my confidence.' The foreman gave me a dirty look and said, 'Yes, and you've got the hawser on to the wrong —— chain, too.'"

In those days few members of the lighter's crew knew how to read or write, and when work was slack Ted's foreman used to insist on giving them all lessons in the foc'sle. He doled out slates and pencils and held half-hour classes, but after that he would get tired of it, produce a pack of cards and take all their money off them at pontoon. He said that he wanted to prevent them spending it on liquor.

At fifty-two, Ted is now a foreman-diver himself, with a crew of ten under him and a seventy-mile stretch of territory that ranges from Teddington to the Nore. He works from seven twenty in the morning to five o'clock every evening, at a weekly wage of £8 17s., plus overtime and "diving time" and makes an average of four dips a week.

At a first glance the sort of jobs that make up the average week's programme seem fairly routine. A barge goes aground in the mud, and the lighter has the job of either raising her or, if she's beyond salvage, wrecking her. A ship sits on a sandbank at slack water and the diver has to go down and see whether she has started any plates. A jetty may collapse and require salvaging or a ship may foul its propeller, but even should none of these things happen there are always moorings to be inspected and buoys to be made fast.

Shallow, But Tricky

In no part of Ted's territory is the Thames deeper than fifty feet (roughly eight fathoms), and the average is rather less: twenty-one feet at low water, with an eighteen-foot rise at the flood. But a Thames diver probably faces danger as many times during the course of a week as his deep-sea colleague.

A ship usually fouls its propeller by taking in a loose strand of wire, winding it tightly in like a cable round a winch. The diver has to go down and "comb" it out which may be a twenty-four hours' job, with a break for tea and sandwiches every five hours.

The last time Ted went down on a job like that he had to send a message to the engine-room asking if they could turn the propeller-shaft a little in order to slacken the length of wire. The engine-room complied—but Ted found that the shaft was turning in the wrong direction, that a loop of the wire had wound tightly round his leg and that he was being drawn irresistibly against the shaft. He signalled frantically with his lifeline—and the ship reversed just in time.

There Before S O S

But so far as the Port of London Authority is concerned it isn't always the most dangerous jobs that command the highest fees. Captain Bob Brooks, the Marine Salvage Officer, reckons up the cost of a job in terms of time, man hours and craft employed, so that a routine job like raising a barge may cost the owners anything up to £200 a day. Within the P.L.A. jurisdiction the question of salvage money does not apply: keeping the fairway clear is a statutory obligation and the salvage crew may go to work before the owner has even had time to send out a distress call. But a job like "combing" a ship's propeller, dangerous though it may be, probably involves little more than the diver's wages, plus the hire of a diving boat at £5 a day.

When the P.L.A. undertakes a private contract the divers sometimes strike lucky.

One pal of Ted's was employed on salvage work on a yacht sunk off Sheerness, and brought up a barnacle-encrusted mirror. The owner of the yacht gave it to him as a present, but he left it lying around at home until one day his wife announced casually: "I've cleaned up that old mirror of yours."

So far as the diver was concerned the barnacles on it were the only thing of interest and he enlarged loudly and at great length on the sanctity of a husband's property. Then he chanced to

turn the mirror over—and found a monogram in diamonds studded on the back. He sold it for £400.

In Ted's estimation there is one man on board his lighter who plays just as important a part in any salvage operation as Ted himself—his linesman, Dick Starkey. The linesman is to the diver rather as a good second is to a boxer—he dresses him, looks after his air-pipe and attends closely to his signals on the life-line.

Ted, like most of the P.L.A.'s half-dozen other divers, still prefers the oldest gear of all—twelve-bolt gear, so called from the number of bolts that secure the brass helmet into position on the breast-plate.

Under his canvas diving suit, which is weighted with a "cartridge-belt" of lead weights, Ted wears flannels, a roll-top sweater and thick woollen undersocks. Steel-studded diving boots and a pair of gloves secured by rubber cuff rings complete his 200-lb. kit.

All the latest aids to diving, such as spirit levels and luminous compasses, are rendered impracticable by the murk of the Thames, so that Ted's only other equipment, apart from his air-pipe and his lifeline, is a sheath knife. The life-line, attached to his waist, is used in lieu of a telephone, and he communicates with Dick Starkey by a prearranged system of shakes and pulls—two shakes and a pull mean "I want to come up," three shakes "I want to go left" and so on.

His air-pipe, which measures roughly 100 feet, is connected to a two-cylinder air-pump with a combination gauge, which shows the linesman both the depth of the water and the pressure of the air. Ted controls his own air supply from a valve fitted in his breastplate; for most jobs he takes on an average of twenty-seven pounds, but the greater the depth the more air he needs to keep himself buoyant.

Went Up Feet First

If he takes on a little too much air it may billow into the seat of his trousers and pitch him flat on his face. If he takes on a lot too much he will float to the surface like a balloon.

But the error of taking on too much air was once responsible for saving Ted's life. His trousers were filling with air at the time, but as he struggled to adjust the valve he discovered that a wire had pinched his air-pipe and cut off his supply.

He took out his knife and sawed the air-pipe through—and the surplus air in his trousers shot him to the surface feet first. Had the air pocket collected in any other region the water would have flowed down the severed pipe and drowned him.

Ted reckons that it takes three years to make a really competent diver; the greatest need, he says, is constant experience—"so that a bloke can pass his hand over the bows of a wreck in the pitch darkness and tell by instinct which is for'ard and which is aft."

Ted copes with most wrecks by one of three methods—raising, floating or wrecking. Raising a barge usually entails no more than "sweeping" her fore and aft, first with two-inch wires and then with seven-inch hawsers. The average lighter, equipped with a twenty-ton steam winch and a five-ton crane, can lift 120 tons over her davits, but anything bigger will involve calling in other lighters.

The rest is pure routine: the wreck is pumped out with a ten-inch suction pump and refloated. Craft without open hatches are an even easier task; they can usually be pumped full of compressed air and floated to the surface.

Wrecks that are sunk too far in the mud and are thus beyond salvage are blown up with gelignite. The diver plants a fifty-pound charge and then detonates it with a hand battery from a diving boat 600 yards away.

Sometimes, if the cargo is valuable, the diver has to go down and salvage it first. Ted once acted as linesman to another diver on a job like that, and he and the whole crew were soon made aware of a singular problem. For while the diver went down undeniably sober he always came up undeniably drunk.

At first the salvage officer thought he had solved the problem. He looked at the stowage plan and discovered that in the hold where the diver was supposed to be working there were a number of cases of whisky.

"But even that had got him beat," says Ted. "Because how did the bloke get the whisky inside his helmet?"

List To Port—And Whisky

A little later on Ted discovered how it was done. The wreck was lying with a slight list to port, and in the sinking a certain amount of air had been trapped in the angle that was formed by the side of the vessel and the 'tween deck. Working the cargo out of the port side released more air, which was trapped in the same way.

The diver had discovered this, and by helping it out with the air from the escape valve had formed a pocket about two feet deep. Sitting on top of the cargo, with the water up to his mouth-piece and several fathoms of water above his head, he drank his fill in peace.

He also twined his lifeline round a stanchion so that any sudden attempt to pull him up would be frustrated—and on the afternoon when he finally drank himself insensible, Ted had to go down and haul him up.

Legend down the Thames associates divers with drink, and so far as the past generation was concerned, Ted feels that there was a lot of truth in it. One old boy that he knew was still diving for a private company when he was seventy-five, but eventually drowned himself by falling into a barrel of water when he was drunk.

But Ted remembers another occasion when the association was more tragic. A ship sank off Sheerness, and the divers were warned that although there was beer down in the hold there was cyanide of potassium as well. The salvage officer was afraid that it might have penetrated the beer corks.

One diver, however, managed to smuggle a bottle out without being seen. He stowed it away in the fo'c'sle overnight, but took a drink of it next morning before he started work. He left the bottle more than half full.

During the morning one of the lightermen went into the fo'c'sle and drank the rest of it. A few minutes later he died in agony. They hauled the diver up, apparently none the worse for wear, and told him what had happened. He promptly fainted from shock.

If he had taken one sip the previous night the same thing would have happened to him. Because he had left the bottle standing upright the cyanide had settled and the lighterman had got the full dose.

Ted himself once did salvage work for one and a half hours in a minefield that was being bombed, and got the B.E.M. "But I've got more respect for death than most divers," he says. "Some of them just don't seem to care."

Shook Hands With Corpse

One diver that Ted knew used to consider it lucky to be working on a wreck where there were bodies; he used to make a point of shaking hands with a corpse before he started work. Another one kept—as a good-luck mascot—the skull of a cabin-boy that he had recovered off Southend.

Ted, who is married and lives at Blackheath, has no ambition to go on diving after he is sixty-five, the P.L.A. retiring limit; his nephew has gone into the business now, so there will be someone left along the Thames to carry on the Bland tradition. In fact, Ted confesses, apart from doing a good job, he never had any great ambitions, although three of his pals, divers themselves, once tried to spur him on.

They were commercial divers, working for a private salvage company, and commercial diving in those days was limited to twenty fathoms. Ted's three pals claimed to have found the solution—a diving dress modelled on a lobster.

There was a fortune in it for all of them, they said; it was going to revolutionize commercial diving. They had made experiments with baby lobsters, taking them down into the depths to see if they could stand the strain, and the baby lobsters seemed to stand it very comfortably. Then they got down to dissecting lobsters and came to the conclusion that a lobster's joints could be reproduced in copper.

A Little Too Lifelike

They were all in funds from recent trips, so they commissioned a firm of coppersmiths to go to work. The diving dress was to be of the ordinary type, but in copper instead of canvas, with lobster joints at the knees, elbows and wrists. A double helmet and exhaust air arrangements convinced them that a diver could descend to any depth and still move his arms and legs.

Ted refused to be their guinea pig, even for a share of the patent, but when their firm agreed to loan them a tug he went along with them to a quiet spot off the Essex coast to watch them try the new suit out.

The lobster joints were all well oiled and the diver slipped easily enough over the side. Ten fathoms down, and all was still well. At fifteen fathoms they received violent signals that he wanted to come up.

"We thought he'd gone balmy when he did come up," says Ted. "He was making awful faces at us through the helmet, and it took two of us to hold him before we could even unscrew it." It turned out that at fifteen fathoms pressure the rear hip joint had collapsed—and taken a solid bite out of the diver's rear, in true lobster fashion.

They sold the suit for old copper and dissolved the syndicate.

Ted Bland "takes a dip." A tap on the helmet from the linesman gives him the O.K. to descend

Kelly's Eye

by DENIS ROBERTSHAW

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE

Pte. Kelly had spat upon the floor. One of them there had stolen that precious eye of his right enough, and on him he'd laid an Irish curse

There was a loud crack. Two small figures, one with a catapult, scampered off. In the salad lay the evidence

"I SHALL DIVORCE YOU," threatened Leila, tears glimmering in her large grey eyes.

How she arrived at this goes back a long way to the night Private Kelly reached the camp I was stationed at outside Cairo.

After being on wireless watch until 2 a.m., I wandered back to my tent in the moonlight, dodging guy ropes. Normally there were eight of us in the tent. One of our number had been posted that morning, so there should have been an empty bed, but when I stepped inside and turned up the low flame of the lamp, I saw that it was already reoccupied.

That was usual. At Base there was always a floating population.

I started to undress. Then, uneasily, I perceived that the newcomer was watching me. He lay on his side and had opened one eye. He was a distinctly ugly-looking customer.

"How do," I said in a low voice.

He made no reply, but continued to watch me. I was sure that at that distance he must have heard.

With a little more unease I turned down the lamp and moved to the earthenware chatti in the far corner of the tent for a mug of water.

As I drank I turned round. The moonlight shone through the canvas. In the blue, diffused light that single eye was still examining me with alarming, unflickering intensity.

When I went back to my bed he stared at me all the way. Then he grunted raucously. I was shocked to a standstill, my heart leaping like a salmon.

But the spell was broken. There was no mistaking that sound. It was a snore, and one hears plenty of snoring in tent life. The sound was repeated. I moved nearer and passed my hand in front of the glittering eye. Of course, it was a glass one.

Kelly turned out to be a Regular. We shuddered when he told us proudly how many years' service he had had. In daylight the glass eye was mildly blue and unoffending, a shade lighter than its fellow. We soon found out that he treasured it far more than the real thing. It was his pride, if he could manage it at all, never to be seen without it.

If he did remove it, as he had to occasionally, he would scowl round and warn us not to disturb his bed or kit.

He first lost the eye on a very important occasion. "Winnie" was visiting Mena House, outside Cairo, and Kelly was detailed for the guard.

An hour before mounting, his eye disappeared. Kelly was transformed into a raging madman.

"Oi'll have the daylights out of ye," he roared. "One of ye has thieved me oye. One of ye is playing me a trick. Now, come on, give it me, or. . . ."

"Don't be such a —— fool," said Trigger shortly. He was a big, rawboned Lancashireman, and tough enough to take that line. "Why should anyone want the thing?"

"Maybe it went out on its own, for a change, to have a *shufti* round the camp," said the unfeeling Taffy, sniggering. His humour was generally malicious and misplaced.

"Ye little ——," howled Kelly. "Oi'm not standing for yer jokes. If it's you has it, give it me back!"

He looked like business as he crossed the tent towards Taffy, so Tom Penny, our peacemaker, put himself in the way. He was a short, stout man and flabby, but somehow people never did him violence.

Kelly got hold of one of his arms. Tom stood passively.

"Hold your horses, Kelly," he said, in his slow, amiable way. "Where did you put it? On your pack on the bed? Trigger is right. Why should any of us move it? Taffy is only joking. You know that, if you stop to think."

Kelly's suffused face, in which his one choleric eye blazed, was thrust forward, but Tom did not yield.

Kelly turned and lumbered back to his bed, beginning to tumble things over on it, his fingers aimless and trembling.

"Ye're a cruel crew," he whimpered. "Here's me, one of the greatest days in me life. And Mr. Churchill to see me without me oye. Now, come on, be kind to an ould Oirish boy and give it me back!"

Jarratt, guard corporal for that night, was also in the tent. He lost patience.

"Quit fussing and get your kit on," he said sternly.

Kelly altered again. He sat down squarely on his bed.

"Oi don't move without me oye," he declared.

He meant it. Jarratt looked at him and weighed the consequences.

"Come on!" said Jarratt. "Get some so-and-so spades and buckets!"

Kelly sat on his bed, arms folded, and watched us slave feverishly, digging up the floor of the tent and going through each bucketful of sand. Clearly, he did not put any faith in it. He really thought someone had pinched the eye.

In what would have been the very last bucket, from a corner well removed from Kelly's bed, the eye stared up at us from the sand. Without a word of thanks, Kelly dusted it, popped it in, rudely turned his back and prepared for guard.

The second and last occasion was in some ways similar.

Kelly was posted "up the blue." He was assigned to an armoured unit well out in the Western Desert.

He was almost ready to depart, dressed as heroes of that time were. His rifle was in his hand, his big pack was on his back, water bottle and little pack hung from his ammo belt, his tin hat was over one shoulder, and his kitbag stood ready to be hoisted on to the other.

What can have possessed him to remove the eye during these preparations, I do not know. Then it happened again. The uproar, the threats, the wheedling, and finally the sullen refusal to budge.

But this time the sand refused to yield up its trophy.

In the last event, both the regimental

sergeant-major and the duty officer came to deal with Kelly.

The duty officer was a young newcomer, just out from England. The indecency of Kelly's conduct made him as pink as the stucco on the walls of the quartermaster's store.

"Stand up, man, when I speak to you," he spluttered. "And get out on duty at once."

Kelly sat fast.

"You know what happens to people who refuse orders?"

"Oi'm not refusing an order, sorr," said Kelly doggedly. "Oi've never refused an order yet, nor ever will. As soon as Oi have me oye, Oi'll be out of here like the crack of a gun."

It was in the sergeant-major's mind that all Kelly wanted was to be put on a charge and get detention, thereby dodging his posting for the time being. He was determined this should not happen.

"Don't bandy words, Kelly," he barked. "All right, my man, I'll deal with you."

He stepped out of the tent, to return soon with six stalwarts quite equal to any toughness that even a madman like Kelly could think up.

"Carry him out and put him in the duty truck," commanded the sergeant-major tersely.

Kelly knew he was beaten, then. At last he rose.

"All right," he said. "Oi'll have to be going. But one of ye has took it, that Oi know. On him Oi lay an Oirish curse!"

He spat on the floor and departed as regally as any king.

WE never saw him again, but he had made his mark. No such scene had been witnessed in the long history of that camp, and it passed into legend to be told and retold by soldiers in many distant lands.

Still, even drama of such a measure fades from the mind in time. Many other happenings came to bury all recollection of Kelly and his eye.

The sands of the desert knew Rommel no more. Mussolini and Hitler passed to their appointed dooms. A ship bore me back to England. I met Leila, slim, tall, grey-eyed and beautiful. I resumed civilian life. We were married.

Then one day a parcel arrived. Within was a dusty white kitbag, padlocked, though it appeared to be almost empty. Long ago I had left it behind, containing a few personal possessions, at Cairo base stores. Now, with a faint smirk, the Army, revealing a terrifying capacity to remember, returned it to me.

Nostalgically I emptied the contents out on to the floor.

An old blue wireless diary, a sand-stuffed watch with the hands missing, a small penknife with mother-of-pearl sides, two or three coloured pencils—and Kelly's eye!

Its gaze held mine hypnotically as it lay there on the green carpet.

Once upon a time that kitbag had stood by my bedside in the old camp tent. By some chance, that day of Kelly's departure, the eye must have rolled off his bed and into the mouth of the bag.

Thence it had made its way to the bottom and had lain there unsuspected.

Guffawing, I picked it up and rolled it in my hand. Still holding it, I folded up the bag and put it away with the other relics.

In the hall the telephone bell rang. I swear that I slipped the eye into my pocket as I ran downstairs; I have already sworn to Leila that it was my intention to tell her about it.

Yet I forgot.

The scream Leila gave at precisely 9.30 a.m. the following morning was a spine-chiller.

Her lovely oval face was chalk-white when I rushed into the kitchen. Her mouth opened and closed and she pointed to the floor.

Sitting on the top of the cat's meat was Kelly's eye.

Leila had a good deal of excuse, and I admitted that afterwards. But I was so relieved after the shock of the scream that I laughed.

Leila screamed again.

"Oh! How horrible!" she cried.

I laughed again.

"It's all right, it's a glass one, that's all, darling."

"You beast," she said, wiping her eyes angrily. "How could you play such a horrid joke?"

"Oh, now, Leila!" I protested.

She stamped her foot.

"It's not funny at all."

"Funny? Who said it was funny?"

"You laughed, didn't you?" she sobbed. "You evidently thought it funny. Otherwise you wouldn't have put it there."

"Put it there? Who said I put it there? Why the devil should I?"

Leila put out a long, slim, silk-clad leg and pushed the saucer away, grimacing.

"There's no need to swear at me," she said. "You must have. How else could it have got there?"

I summoned my utmost self-control.

"Let me make it quite clear now," I said. "I did not put it there. It wasn't a joke. I don't know anything about it. At least. . . ."

"At least what?" she pounced.

"Will you stop," I said, "behaving like a prosecuting counsel? This thing belonged to a man I knew in the Middle East."

As patiently as I could, without going into too many details, I explained about Kelly.

"Very well, then," she said stiffly. "I don't want to hear any more about it. Just get rid of it."

There, in front of her, I dropped the eye into the ashcan by the sink.

Of course I suspect the cat. It must have been the cat. I could think of no other explanation.

At nine fifty that evening Leila rang me at the club.

"You'll have to come home at once," she said in her most narky tone. "I've just come in and the whole house is flooded."

This was not accurate, as I pointed out. The kitchen floor, however, was sopping. The cold tap had been left running slightly and the sink drain was blocked.

"You always let that sink tidy get too full," I said.

"How dare you!" said Leila, outraged. "There's been nothing to put into it since I emptied it this morning. In any case, you left the tap running."

Try as I would, with every implement I could find in the house, the obstruction refused to move. The elbow joint beneath the sink was as fixed as the Rock of Gibraltar.

THE plumber was cleaning up when I arrived home next evening.

"It's that horrid, beastly thing of yours," flamed Leila, vulgarly oblivious that we were not alone.

"What do you mean?" I said, with an unpleasant presentiment.

"It were a eye," said the plumber, picking up his bag. "A glass eye, Mister. Silly thing to have about near a sink, if I might say so. Things like that roll, you know."

I gritted my teeth.

"Where is it?" I asked.

"What? The eye?" he asked, as if it had quite passed from his mind.

I knew then what he was going to say. There flashed to me again the peculiar way in which Kelly's eye had evaded him on two occasions to my knowledge. Also I recalled Kelly's dramatic parting words.

"Oh," said the plumber. "It were a eye, all right, Mister; no doubt about that. I was just telling the Missus when you came in. I put it on the edge of that chair. She must have flicked it off going by."

At midnight, fury in my breast, I surveyed the kitchen in utter frustration. There was not a single piece of furniture in the room. The floor was matless. Yet that infernal eye was nowhere to be found.

Matters between Leila and me were strained for some days.

The visit of Aunt Ada, whom I loathed, came almost as a relief.

The dislike is mutual.

Aunt Ada is large and usually wears a sealskin coat. Her face is round, entirely without wrinkles, and the colour of dough.

She gave me a smacking kiss when she arrived. Then she stepped back, narrowing her small black eyes.

"Why, Leila, dear, what have you been doing to Denis? He looks very pale? Isn't he well?"

"He looks fit enough to me," said Leila ungraciously.

Aunt Ada wagged a fat forefinger at me.

"Too many nights at that club of yours? Tobacco smoke, beer, fug! Oh, you men, you're impossible. How often has he been going, Leila?"

FOR weeks before I had never been near the club, but it so happened that I had been there three times in the past ten days.

"It's perfectly true, Auntie," said Leila, laughing brightly, pretending that it was a joke. "He's always there."

"Of course," I said. "I've been sleeping there for the last fortnight."

Silence fell for a prolonged moment.

"Hmm," said Aunt Ada. In her favourite rôle of tactful aunt, she changed the subject. Her eye wandered round the drawing-room walls.

I braced myself to keep my temper. Here it came.

"You still haven't put that photograph up, Denis? Aren't you a forgetful boy?"

Here Leila was with me, however.

"There are so many little jobs to do, Auntie!"

The photograph is one of our wedding. The photographer was engaged by Aunt Ada. In that particular group she beams roundly behind us; Leila and I both bear the most appalling squints and horrible fixed smiles.

This sort of passage of arms went on steadily, remorselessly for three whole days. I was very near the end of my tether when tea time came that last day and I knew that there was only an hour to Aunt Ada's going.

Then it happened. The house was shaken by a thunderous crash. I found Aunt Ada on her back in the kitchen, surrounded by the shards of our Crown Derby tea service.

"My leg," she groaned. "Oh, my leg."

By the fender lay Kelly's eye. It glared balefully up at me.

"I slipped on a marble or something," she wept. "I've broken my leg. Don't stand gaping; get a doctor."

I had the eye in my pocket before Leila came in, but she was too sharp. She knew within a few moments exactly what had happened, without a word passing between us.

"Poor Auntie!" she breathed furiously. "It's all your fault. I told you to get that thing out of here. It's absolutely criminal of you to leave it lying around."

"I tell you, I searched the place for

"Table behaviour, no . . . tactful handling, no . . . ah, here we are . . . tantrums . . ."

it," I muttered bitterly. "I had everything out when you'd gone to bed."

"Then how could it have got under the rug? Tell me that? It's just carelessness!"

"Great heavens!" I exploded. "You know darned well——"

Leila dissolved into tears.

"Yes, swear at me! That's your way of getting out of it. Well, if you don't get rid of it once and for all, I'll divorce you!"

Then and there, I almost put the eye in the fire. My hand was on its way when I realized that there was a distinct chance that being glass it could explode. I hurried out and across the road to the open culvert on the far side. The eye plopped down into the swiftly running water and out of my ken.

The doctor had said it would be three weeks before Aunt Ada could walk. A ligament had been strained. He was a fortnight out in his estimate. However, that may not reflect on his ability. Aunt Ada, I am certain, enjoyed being in bed and sending us scurrying on all the multifarious errands a not-too-ill invalid can devise.

"Aren't you dears kind to me," she simpered when I carried anything in. As I stood at the bedside, she would run her eyes purposefully over every item on the tray, until she could think of something else she wanted bringing.

"Your head will never save your feet, will it?" she sighed regretfully as I stalked out.

But even Aunt Ada had to get up one day. One by one I counted off fifty-six days of purgatory, before she was at last fit enough to leave us.

We waved away the taxi and returned indoors. Leila and I embraced as reunited lovers do.

I stroked her hair. She raised those limpid grey eyes of hers and I lost myself in their depths.

"Alone at last," she murmured. "How lovely to be alone."

"What utter peace," I said. "Just the two of us. That old she-devil——"

"Ah, sweetheart," admonished Leila gently. "Don't spoil it by thinking of her. And after all she's old, you know. And she must have had a lot of pain with that leg at the start. . . ."

I changed the subject.

"We're alone, that's the main thing," I said. "It's almost like getting married again. Remember how we first came to the house . . . ?"

"Oh, yes" said Leila, eyes shining. "Remember our first tea? Let's have one just like that. Just our two selves. . . ."

"With the table in the bay window. . . ." I said.

We had it all ready in half an hour. As we sat tête à tête at the table, looking out through the bay, the mellow sunlight bathed us, and green salad had never seemed so crisp and titillatingly cool to the palate.

In the fraction of a second, as Leila poured my second cup of tea, this illusion, this tender little bubble of a world, was literally shattered. A startling crack, and splinters of glass showered upon us and the table.

A complete pane of glass had disappeared from the window.

Stupidly I smeared my finger across a growing streak of red on my hand. I rose and peered out. Two small figures, legs twinkling, were haring down the road. From the hand of one dangled a catapult.

"Oh, my dear," whispered Leila.

I saw that she was not looking at my hand.

In the salad, it's cold blue against the green, lay Kelly's eye.

I SWEAR it needed courage, after sucking the cut on my hand, to reach out and pick it up.

With the act passed both eye and curse—if you care to think there was one.

The eye grated between my fingers, slid from them again and separated on the tablecloth into two halves. From one of the two hemispheres shot a spear of light—no, a pulsating shaft which ebbed and flowed, first white, then deep blue, then bronze and green and white again.

"Oh, my dear!" whispered Leila again, but this time in breathless awe.

I couldn't speak.

It turned out to be a diamond, and a large one at that.

I knew at last why Kelly had been so determined not to go without his eye; why, even though he must have been certain of the secrecy of the hiding place, he could never rid himself of the vague fear that it might, in some way, be discovered. His curse seemed a little pitiful now, beside the rich reality of the gem.

Besides, it didn't look much like ill-luck to come into such a legacy.

I went to a lot of trouble to satisfy my conscience.

I wrote at least seven letters to Army Records about Kelly—without revealing my real purpose.

They never said so in so many words, but somewhere in Italy he must have deserted. From other sources—old comrades in his unit at the time—I found out that he had been absent without leave for a month in South Africa on the way out to the Middle East at the beginning of the war. I suspect that it was then that he came into possession of the diamond, and, if I know Kelly, it was not by the legal channels.

Well, what would you have done with it? I felt we had earned it, and Leila thinks so, too.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

ANYONE who has visited Hoylake, at the mouth of Cheshire's River Dee, will find this cover picture familiar. It was painted on Hilbre Island, in the Dee estuary, the largest of a group of islands sometimes known as the Red Rocks. Douglas L. Mays did the picture while on holiday there with three of his four daughters. Painting on holiday is nothing new to Mays, who puts "work" at the top of the list of things he most likes. He has also been known to play hockey, golf and cricket, but avoids parties whenever possible and, though he drinks occasionally, says he always works better on tea—and plenty of tobacco.

Wrap it up in steel

And the answer is the once-familiar tin of pineapple chunks! A tin, you see, is really steel. Whatever its contents or its shape, over 98% of it is steel.

That sheet steel is coated with tin just as a railway engine is coated with paint, but the can remains just as much steel as the engine.

This sort of tin-plate for canning is one of our steel exports to food-producing countries like the Argentine. Providing the 'wrappers', you see, helps to pay for the contents!

You can reckon that a lot of our imported food is paid for by steel in other ways too, since manufactures of steel now account for 47% in value of our total exports. Yes, steel means a lot to every one of us now.

Our steel industry now is a working partnership between individual enterprise and overall planning.

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SIX SUMMERS . . . that stand out in a famous columnist's album: This week he describes a summer long ago in London that was very exciting indeed for a small boy **. . . by PAUL HOLT**

Coronation year, 1911

IT WAS HOT, that summer of 1911; hotter, much hotter than we have been having. The grass was browner, the air stiller and the relieving thunder never came. But we did not go away.

This to me at the age of five was a great mystery and a great irritation. My mother sat all day long in the heat on the balcony of our flat in the Albert Bridge Road, overlooking Battersea Park, and her sister, Auntie Bosh, a tiny woman with wispy hair and merry eyes, had come to look after me. My mother was having another baby, but I was not to know that.

One day before bedtime, when I was training my precious dusty worm to climb up the fireguard in the nursery, my father came home from Fleet Street and taught me a fascinating new jingle. I stood on the brown, square coalbox with the brass shovel and brass handle at the top and I shouted after him: "The King is dead . . . Long Live the King!"

Frightened Me

My father said it should be said like this: "The King is dead (very softly) . . . LONG LIVE THE KING!"

But I remember I preferred it the other way and for some days after I wandered through Battersea Park shouting out the the first part and whispering the second part. There was a big man I used to see in the park. I was frightened of him, for he wore a wide black hat and, despite the heat, a kind of magician's black cape. His eyes were small and fierce behind pince-nez with a black ribbon, and he assumed a little brown moustache, shaped like a Chinaman's, and an ebony stick with silver knob.

The frightening thing about him was that he heralded this vast, theatrically

Magician's cape and piping voice . . .

impressive appearance with a little, querulous, piping voice better suited to a disappointed pharmacist or baby-clothes salesman.

As he came up with me this time I was happily poking a stick at a raven through the painted iron bars of a small, round aviary, shouting out about the King who was both dead and alive. The ebony cane's ferrule struck me sharply in the ribs and the piping voice cried: "Don't be cruel, little boy."

At once I disintegrated into a scald of angry, frightened tears and ran away. I was disgusted with myself, but more than ever frightened of the big black man. He lived in a flat above us and whenever I opened our front door I would listen for the tap of his stick coming down the dark stone stairs and, hearing it, dart back again.

My father told me the man's name was G. K. Chesterton and later in life I grew to love his writing, particularly his biography of Dickens.

It was hot and I got sunstroke, running about after tennis balls hit into the dusty flower beds by young women with voices like flat clarinets.

I know the old newsreels will tell you that the emancipated young woman of those days was arch and modest and played her gentle games either in dream-like slow motion or a jerky hoorosh; but my clear recollection is of young women of imperious mien who in their tennis frocks looked tubular, like sticks of toothpaste topped by a bird's nest. Their eyebrows were like thunderclouds and their lips were tipped with down, which in turn was tipped by tiny jewels of perspiration. They looked strong and could run fast and I gave them a fairly wide berth.

When Dr. Ormerod came to see about my sunstroke, he took a pink stethoscope out of his top hat. His clothes smelled of whisky and as he left the nursery he gave my dappled rocking horse a tap on the rump, which I thought an absurd thing to do, for, unlike this troublesome king, we knew, both of us, that the rocking horse was not alive.

When I was better it was quite splendid for, in addition to the minced lamb and carrots and sago pudding which seemed at that time to be my staple diet, I was to be allowed a treat. I remember I was sitting on the coalbox staring up at my heroine, Miss Pauline Chase, when I heard about this. Miss Chase was then admired by all for her performance as Peter Pan and she had sent me a coloured postcard of herself on which was written in her own bold hand: "From Peter to Paul."

My Ice-cream Machine

The treat was to make first and eat afterwards some vanilla ice-cream. A round metal-hooped tub stood on the veranda by my mother's chair and inside it there was a silvery cylinder that went round and round as you turned a vertical handle at the side. And between the cylinder and the tub there was packed a whole, glorious, sparkling mess of splintered ice, dulled with grey salt.

I tasted the salt at once and found it excellent. Then I churned until my small arms were on flame with aching, while my mother, who was at that time a babyish, contented woman with bright red hair, rocked and read *Helen's Babies* to herself.

For quite a week I wasn't allowed to go out in the sun to play and I sat under the shade of a peeling plane tree while my Auntie Bosh taught me to read THE CAT WILL HAVE KITTENS, pointing out each letter with a golden hairpin she took from her top-knot. One day she read me out the stories from *Struwwelpeter*.

It did not for one minute strike me that the purpose of these German tales was cautionary, to make me clean, tidy, attentive and careful. I just thought they were cruel and evil.

Although we did not go away to Margate that year and I sadly missed the crusty smell of donkeys on the sands and crumbling dead starfish in the bright but workmanlike tin pail, there were compensations.

For quite a while the conversation of the grown-ups had been dreary dull, for the women had talked of nothing but a man called CRIP-PEN, who had run away to sea, the lucky fellow.

While the men talked of little but another man called *Billitch*. It took me a long time to find out that the one was a murderer with charm, while the other was the fabulous Surrey fast bowler, Bill Hitch. I was never properly told about the one nor taken to see the other, although they assured me that Mr. Hitch was my uncle once removed.

Hanging Out The Flags

But now we were going to have a party. I had noticed a vaguely festive air in the streets and now it was coming upstairs to our place, No. 31 Cyril Mansions. My part of it already had been to hang a flag with a red Scottish lion on it and a gilded wooden spike at the top out between the bars of the nursery window, and I had also plaited the sharp, brittle tail of my rocking horse with red, white and blue ribbon. My elder brother would not have the mane touched.

We were also going to have coloured globes, embossed like lozenges, with little candles inside them, strung from the balcony railings, and Annie, our nursemaid, had a big, glossy brooch in the shape of two ovals with the faces of a bearded man and a placid woman, tinted.

I was allowed to go in when my mother was dressed and Auntie Bosh, who didn't much care how she looked, was helping her pile up her lovely red hair, high and massive. They both seemed to be stiffly brocaded, again in a tubular way, but above this constriction their shoulders and upper arms showed through the gently falling lace, like white carp through weeds. They were both dressed in mauve, which was then pronounced *mawve*.

That night I committed my first wickedness, for when I heard the hum of the party below I deliberately let a drop of eau-de-Cologne slip into my eye and then roared for my mother. She came up to comfort me, smelling all warm and patchouli and brought me a chocolate with mauve crystallized sugaring in the form of forget-me-nots. As she bent low over me in the dark she felt wonderfully soft and sophisticated and enveloping, and I fell asleep while she stroked my damp hair back.

In the morning it was again dressing-up time and I had to be wriggled into a fine, pale-blue tussore thing with ankle-strap shoes. My mother wore a blue and white sailor effect and carried a parasol.

We set off by hansom cab, jingling fine, and as we crossed the bridge to Chelsea and on to Westminster the crowds grew and the straw hats multiplied and the banners flew. Everybody looked poppy-cheeked in the sunshine.

We walked and pushed and perspired until we found our places in the bunting-covered wooden stands, and there, because I could not see, being so small, I was hoisted on to the shoulder of a gigantic and friendly Negro, wearing

I was perched on his shoulders . . .

a top hat and smelling of musk. Just then there were trumpets and a cavorting of sweating flanks, cuirasses, plumes and swords, and, following that, a golden fairy coach with, dimly seen, a bearded, crowned little man bowing and a placid-faced woman, crowned, bowing more delicately.

They were George V and Queen Mary arriving for their coronation, and the top-hatted Negro who smelled of musk was Jack Johnson, heavyweight boxing champion of the world.

The Horse Bus

But the best thing of all about that summer was when it rained. Then I was sent for a walk in my mackintosh and I used to cross the Albert Bridge, all by myself, and wait at the Pier Hotel at the Chelsea end for a horse bus to pull up to change horses. I was allowed to climb the box to hold the reins while the horses, steaming under their black mackintosh covers, were backed out and fresh ones backed in again. I can still smell with delight the smell of wet reins.

Of course, what I have been writing about may be two summers, not one. When you are only five years old one summer is as long as ten and therefore time is deceptive.

NEXT WEEK: Motor tour through Britain

"I see you taking a journey to Australia"

NIGHT WITHOUT STARS

Continued from page 18

about him? Put me into the picture."

"Precious little. I've seen him sometimes at the Casino playing boule. A mug's game, boule, old boy. The odds aren't worth taking."

"You say he runs a restaurant?"

"Well, I imagine he's beyond that now. He *owns* them, supervises. Very select sort of places." John chewed reflectively. "The one in Nice is in the rue Diano Marina. Beautiful food at fantastic prices. Soft lights, sweet music. The only people who can afford to go there are the war profiteers. I shouldn't think he's very popular."

"Why not?"

"Well, are the new rich anywhere? Certainly not in France. His restaurants were open all through the Occupation, of course, and I've heard someone say that they were full of German officers."

"Is that sort of thing remembered?"

"Good lord, yes. And will be for years."

"Have you ever seen Grognard with a girl? On the slim side, rather tall, light brown colouring—poise but no show, quick on the uptake—oval face, pretty."

"Uh-huh? I did see him with a young woman about a month ago. She was quite a looker. It might fit. Remember thinking she can't be as young and innocent as she looks if she's with Grognard."

"Yes."

"Yes, what?"

"You ever heard of anyone called Delaisse?"

"No. . . ." He waited. "What's all this leading up to, Giles?"

"I wish I knew."

NEXT day was Monday, and Monday was Alix's day off. We'd arranged to hire a small cutter and spend the afternoon fishing, and I wasn't going to be put off by Grognard's visit. There'd been clouds over the mountains all morning but about noon it cleared and we left the harbour in bright sun.

There were all sorts of things I found I could still do with Alix's help, and sailing was one of them. In fact, it only needed an occasional word from her to set me right.

Sometimes she seemed to see for both of us, and quite often I could anticipate what she was going to say. It was queer the way it had grown up between us in so short a time.

Once we got out I'd intended telling her about Pierre, but I just hadn't the heart to begin it.

PERHAPS I was flattering myself, but it seemed to me that she'd changed as well in these few weeks. She'd got younger and more lighthearted, and the flashes of angry cynicism were rarer. I tried to see her in my mind sitting there in the bows, the breeze blowing her hair back from her face. She was wearing a silk frock that slithered when she moved; and she was carrying a big leather handbag with a strap over one shoulder and a zip fastener.

About two the clouds came over again and it began to rain. We were off Cap Ferrat and it meant tacking back all the way, so Alix suggested we should run into Villefranche. We could make use of the freshening wind, and we could get shelter there until the rain cleared.

We got in safely enough and ran for shelter. But Alix's frock was soaking, so after waiting a bit to see if the rain would ease off she suggested we should go up to her friends and get coats and perhaps a change of clothing.

She said a bit doubtfully: "They are my husband's relatives and friends, you'll understand."

"There's no need for me to go along. I can stay here while you nip up."

"No," she said. "I would like you to come."

I followed her along the quay and then up a rising street that ran under an archway and broke into steps. We turned and climbed a few more steps, then over a narrow bridge and along a street which ran parallel with the quay.

"This is the rue St. Agel. On the corner is the Café Gambetta, where we are going."

IT was the quiet part of the afternoon, but there were four men playing cards in a corner of the café as we went in, and a boy was in charge behind the bar.

The four men stopped playing, I could tell because the cards no longer moved, and the boy came forward, greeting Alix with a reservation in his voice that was no doubt due to me. Where was Mère Roget? asked Alix. Resting, said the boy; it would be worth his life to disturb her before four. She had come with her friend for shelter and dry clothes, said Alix; was Gaston in the kitchen? Yes, Gaston was in the kitchen, and we went through some bead curtains into a sort of inner dining-room and from there into the kitchen.

Gaston, a middle-aged man with a wooden leg, was rattling pans about, but spoke to Alix warmly enough. He seemed a bit uncertain what to make of me, yet I was pretty sure from his manner that he'd already heard of me. The warmth of the kitchen was welcome after the rain. Alix left me there for a few minutes while she went upstairs, and when she came down I could tell that she'd changed her frock. She also brought me a coat of some alpaca material and made me change.

"It is Armand's," she said. "My brother-in-law. It will be a little short but it will do."

We went back into the dining-room and Gaston brought us coffee.

"Let's drink it out here," she said, and we moved out on to an open veranda with the rain drumming on the roof. There was a good deal of space all round us, and I didn't need to be told that we overlooked the bay.

I said: "I don't think you can expect your husband's family to take to me like a long-lost brother, Alix."

"Oh, that's all right. I'm rather glad you are going to meet them."

"Do they know about Grognard, too?"

"Oh, yes, of course."

I said: "I ought to tell you. I've been going to all day. Pierre came to see me last Friday."

She was startled. "Pierre? Where? At your flat?"

"Yes."

"What did he want?"

"He wanted to warn me against the dangers of trespass?"

"Trespass?"

"Poaching and trespass on his property. The property being you."

"Oh. . . ." She picked up her bag and unzipped it, rustling about inside. "How silly of him. How childish. . . . He has no right to interfere."

"That's what I thought." But I should have been happier if she'd sounded more decided.

"What did he say?"

I told her what had gone on.

"And you didn't—ask him about my husband?"

"No."

"You're very trusting, Giles."

"Not specially so. But I trust you. Why shouldn't I?"

"I have to tell you," she said, "that Jacques, my husband, is dead."

The rain was stopping now; the spots overhead were intermittent, but it was still gushing off the gutter.

I said: "I half guessed that. Or that you'd separated. Of course I wasn't sure."

She said in a flat unemotional voice: "He was in the Resistance, Giles. He was one of the leaders although he was only twenty-three. He was a journalist; it helped him to get about. Even during the Occupation they were allowed some freedom of movement if they pretended to be—not unfriendly. He volunteered for active sabotage work. He was a man without fear—full of high spirits, reckless. Just being with him was an adventure. I met him in February three years ago, and we were married in the April. Six weeks afterwards he was arrested. In May, they hanged him in the public square in Nice. They left his body hanging there for a week. . . ."

I said after a bit: "Hell, I'm so very sorry. I'd no idea."

"They left his body hanging there for a week. They left his body hanging there for a week. Every day I used to pray, dear God, may they have cut him down—but he was still there. I used to tell myself it wasn't the Jacques I knew and loved, that Jacques had gone, was far away. But it didn't work."

SHE put her hands up to her face. "The body that I had known, the hands that had touched me, the lips that had kissed me, were up there moving when the wind blew, changing colour, swelling, blackening. Dear Christ. . . ."

I didn't say anything. Now that the rain had stopped you could hear the stir of the sea down below.

"I still dream about it," she said. "I wake up sweating all over. You see now, Giles, why I don't want to talk about it. . . ."

I said: "You were very much in love with him."

"I loved him very much. He was the finest man I've ever known."

Neither of us said anything then for a long time. There was a canary somewhere chirping in a cage.

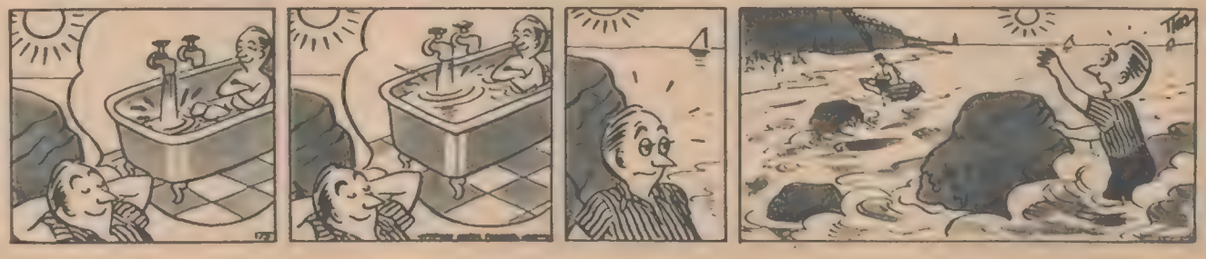
"Oh, well," she said. "We had six weeks—though he was away half that time. Three weeks perhaps in all. Three weeks in a lifetime is as much as you can expect, isn't it?"

"I don't know. I don't know the answer at all."

"Father Mathieu talks about resignation. Resignation to the will of God. I spoke of that to—to someone I know—and he said the will of God is the priest's name for anything that looks

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM



NOW YOU KNOW

by BERNARD GEIS

OATMEAL IS PROBABLY the most nourishing of the common foods known to man, penny for penny and pound for pound. Adults who don't care for milk may profitably garnish their oatmeal with syrup.

Dietitians say that a bowl of oatmeal, properly cooked with salt and then fortified with natural honey (if you can get it), constitutes "a meal in itself."

like the will of a stupid, malicious ape."

I said: "It's a point of view. All the same——" and stopped.

"Well, hasn't it been so in your case, too? Are you resigned to your blindness? Do you feel that is anything but a wanton act? Tell me."

"No. . . . But you should have asked me six weeks ago. I'd have cheered for your friend then. Now—one feels faintly less resentful. That's your doing."

After a minute she got up. "Have you a cigarette, Giles?"

I lit one for her and knew that her lips weren't quite steady.

I said: "God knows, I'm completely uncertain. We all are these days. But it's all much too difficult to put in simple terms. I feel that a stupid ape would just smash a thing up and then turn his attention to something else."

"And you think you still have God's attention?"

"I don't know if I've ever had it. But I can dissent from the negative without asserting the positive."

She stirred her coffee, which must have gone cold. "And what is there for me?"

It was on my lips to say "Pierre Grognard," but I knew somehow that it wasn't so. She might be going to marry him, but he didn't make up for the man she'd really cared for.

"It may come."

"Yes," she said. "It may come."

I turned at a sound in the doorway behind us, and Alix said:

"Ah, Mère Roget, this is my English friend, Monsieur Gordon."

Mère Roget had a deep voice and a hard hand. I pictured her as a woman of about sixty, formidable and untidy. She wore carpet slippers.

"Gordon is a French name, m'sieu."

"Is it? It's also English and Scottish."

"There is a village near here called Gourdon, which is also known as the Eagle's Nest because it is high in the mountains."

"That is G-O-U-R-D-O-N, mother. Giles's name is G-O-R-D-O-N."

"Nevertheless it is said it was the birthplace of the Gordons. Have you ever been there, m'sieu?"

"No. But I shall go."

"A wonderful view. But pardon, of course. I forgot."

So she also had heard of me. Alix said: "We were out sailing, mother, and got caught in the storm."

"Well, it is over now. In an hour you will be able to start back."

Later we went into the back room, and Armand, the brother, came in; and then two more men. All the men were a bit surly. Mère Roget polite with a hint of reserve. I wondered if they were pro-Grognard or merely anti anyone who threatened to replace Jacques. I would have liked to go, but couldn't leave without Alix.

There was a piano in this room, and someone started strumming on it, while the place filled up. It's always more difficult to pick out things when there are a lot of people in a room. A big fisherman with the agreeable name of Roquefort began to sing the choruses, and several of the others joined in. Alix was in the kitchen talking to Mère Roget, and I felt rather out of it.

Eventually the pianist gave up and noisily refused to do any more. He slumped over to a table near by and I could hear him gulping his wine.

They were a queer bunch, more mixed than one expects to find even in a French café. Two people at the next table were discussing the effects of inhaling chloride of ethyl. They were the only cultured voices I'd heard except Alix's.

Alix said: "You play yourself, don't you, Giles?"

She'd come in unnoticed in the din and had evidently been watching me. I was a bit annoyed.

"I used to know 'Bluebells of Scotland,'" I said shortly.

I might have known that that penny wouldn't drop.

"Would you play something now?"

"Good God, no."

"Please. To please me."

"It's high time we went. It'll take us two hours to get back."

"Never mind. Just a little tune. Do you know anything French?" Some of the others were listening.

I said: "You're embarrassing me very much. I haven't touched a piano for three years. We'll go now and say goodbye to Mère Roget."

She put her hand on mine. "Please, dear Giles."

It was a bit silly to get hot and indignant, but I couldn't help it.

"Hell!" I said, and got up and groped round to the piano. Somebody clapped politely.

BY any respectable standards I'm not a good pianist—partly because when I was ten I found I could play any tune I could whistle without learning the notes. But in the old days I'd been able to make a show among friends.

Now I wasn't among friends. I sat on the chair in a mild rage and couldn't think what to play. Quite a lot of the people had stopped talking.

I thought of a thing my mother had played and that I'd learned from her, a short thing by Listz which ends up with a whole pianoful of octaves and is generally the sort of showy piece that fits a bad temper.

Anyway I went crashing into this, desperately out of practice and playing a piano for the first time without seeing it. But perhaps annoyance helped, and I got through the whole thing with only about six mis-hits.

When it was over a lot of people clapped and I heard them say: "*très bien!*" and "*bravo!*" and "*écoutez le donc!*"

I wiped my hands down the sides of Armand's alpaca coat and tried "Gardens in the Rain." Debussy is a good starter in most company, and he went over well here. I dropped three bars in the middle, but nobody seemed to mind. Everyone had stopped talking.

"Go on, please," said Alix who'd got round to the piano.

Then I suddenly thought of those

Continued on next page

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FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues on right. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Cross Clues XWORD 647

1. Apt to fill an actor with misgivings
2. Anyone wanting these would expect to find greater variety in big town or city
4. Husband likes a wife who is able to do this
7. A man may be a failure at his job because he's not a good this
10. Understanding between nations is better when based on
12. Unless Britain maintains this in the Far East, her trade is bound to suffer
13. You can't be a tip-top air pilot without having

Down Clues

1. The money they attract depends largely upon the interest they offer
2. Youngsters taken away on family holiday are often not
3. Roadhog is lucky if he gets only this
5. Now and again makes a critic's work more readable
6. It's easy to slip on
8. Nervous person prefers company, when obliged to walk in this late at night
9. Naturally looks smaller after being grilled
11. Absence of this on train can make elderly passenger very uncomfortable

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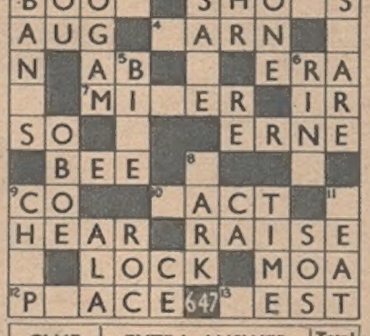

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated Sept. 10.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

I enclose P.O. value..... No.....

647 Closing Postmark MON., AUG. 29

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

NIGHT WITHOUT STARS

Continued from previous page

Provençal songs I'd learned here twelve or thirteen years ago. By this time I was feeling better about it all and gathered the company was feeling better about me. Halfway through the first song Roquefort the fisherman came up to the piano, and after a bit of coughing and shuffling he joined in. Others followed him. They sang quite decently.

When I'd played four, someone handed me a glass of wine and Gaston patted me on the back, and they crowded round asking which others I knew.

In the end it was dark before we left, and we had to leave the cutter in the harbour and go home by bus.

In the bus Alix said, delighted: "It was just on the impulse. I had a feeling that something, something was needed to make you feel at home and make them . . . accept you. I know you were angry about it at the time," she said. "But not now?"

"Absolutely unpardonable."

She patted my hand. "Now you're a friend there. You will always be welcome."

The crowded bus roared and swayed madly towards Nice, full of talking, laughing, arguing passengers.

When we got out I said: "Friday, as last week?"

"I'll try."

"Promise."

"All right. I promise. . . . But it may not be for very much longer, Giles. I wish I could say different."

"You mean you wish you could say different—for my sake."

She didn't speak. Some of the bubble had gone out of her.

"Whether I understand that or not," I said, "there's one thing I find hard to take in. Your husband being what he was—and you thinking of him as you do—how can you be—friendly with Pierre?"

"Why?"

"Well—he made money out of the Occupation, didn't he?"

"Who told you that?"

"Someone I know."

"Well, it's not true . . . or it's only half the story."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"Pierre kept his restaurants open and was much patronized by the Germans. In fact he openly collaborated. But he really used his restaurants to pick up information from them and pass it on to the F.F.I. He was a member of the same Resistance group as Jacques. He was arrested soon after Jacques and only escaped death by a miracle. He was decorated for his work. He was Jacques's closest friend."

To be continued next week

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

Readers with personal problems (other than medical) can ask for advice from our team of experts. Queries should be sent to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Enclose a stamped envelope for reply, please.

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